

ARTHUR'S

56

HOME MAGAZINE

FIFTY-SIXTH VOLUME.

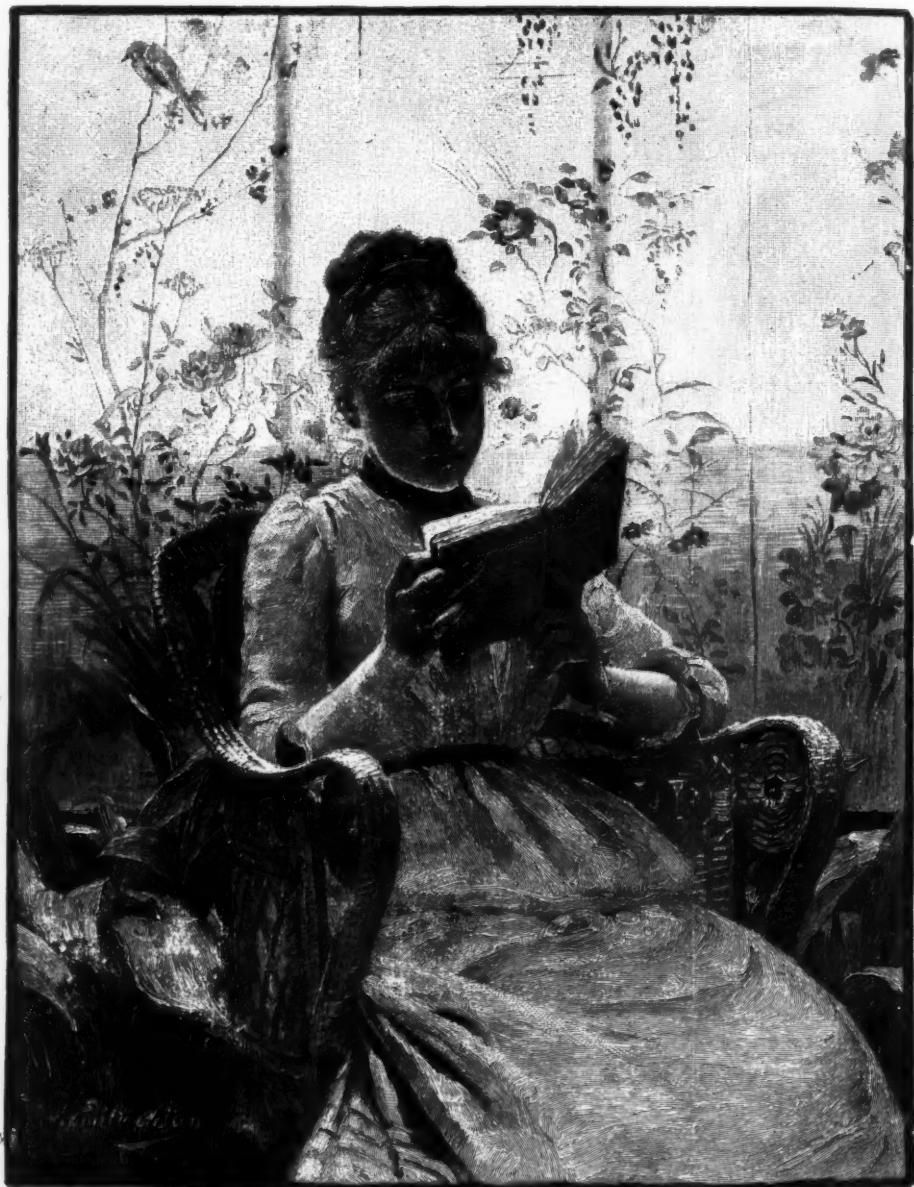
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MIDSUMMER.

ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1887.

"THE CRADLE OF HEAVEN."



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Sonst ihr Blumen bei den Wiegenfesten. Jetzt feiert
Sie ihr grösstes; denn die Bahre ist die Wiege des Hirten.—RICHTER.

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wave— river;
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We've left her to her rest. The nightingale
From yonder yew-tree lullaby is singing;
The chimes from this old belfry faint
are ringing,
And eve's gray curtains now her earth-bed veil.

She's worn and weary with the fretful day.
Tread lightly, ye who love her—she is sleeping.
Break not her rest with any burst of weeping,
But Requiescat softly let us pray.

She's borne the burden and the heat of noon.
She trod the dusty road with toiling mortals,
Until she gained Heaven's ever-open portals,
Where sank she down to rest her, not too soon.

And we, her own ones—see, we dry our tears—
Look up, my Gretchen—mine eyes gaze out wider:

For all the heaven of heavens cannot hide her,
Where sleeping she dreams of us, through glad years.

Here in the church-porch, where her feet oft trod,
I pray you, friends, if through her toilsome hours
Ye loved her, bring your wreaths of memory's flowers
Whose fragrance mounts up to the Hill of God.

Lay them upon the green sward, on her breast.
Perchance their breath may softly, in her dreaming,
Speak of our village bowers and sunlight gleaming,
Until the blithe day break upon her rest.
Ye who were fain on some past youthful year
To glad her birthday festival with flowers,
Bring on this greater day your fairest showers,
For Heaven's cradle is the slumberer's bier.

AUTHOR OF A PASSAMAQUODDY SIREN.

TRIALS OF A MANUSCRIPT.

A DRAWER in the author's table was opened, and a manuscript came tumbling in. It was a dirty, travel-stained manuscript, frayed at the edges, and full of pin holes.

"Well, you look as though you had had a pretty hard time of it!" exclaimed a clean, fresh manuscript, which lay, all unfolded, near the dirty intruder.

"Dear me, I should say so!" sighed the traveled manuscript. "I have had no rest, night or day, for the past six months. I must have traveled at least ten thousand miles, and I have been handled by as

many as forty or fifty different pairs of hands. Oh! I do hope I can rest a little while now."

"Rest!" exclaimed the fresh manuscript. "Why, I should just enjoy traveling around the country as you have been doing. What a splendid time you must have had! And now you are glad to be stuffed into this dark, close-smelling old drawer."

"Yes, I am!" cried the returned manuscript, curling up gratefully in a corner. "And you will be, too, when you have gone through what I have. Never mind!

Your turn will come pretty soon. I see the drawer is getting empty."

"Oh! I hope I shall soon have the chance to see the world," exclaimed the fresh manuscript. "Tell me what I must go through with, and what I shall see, if you are not too tired."

"Well, in the first place," said the returned manuscript, "you won't *see* much of anything. You will be taken out of the drawer, your back will be broken in two places, you will be doubled up as I am, with a hateful, sticky stamp over your face, and stuffed into a tight envelope, which will be sealed, so that you can get neither air nor light. Then your destination will be written on the envelope, and you will be dropped into a dark iron box on a lamp post. By and by the mail collector will come along, unlock the box, and take you out. You may get a glimpse of sunlight through your envelope as you pass from the letter-box to the carrier's pouch, but soon you will be in utter darkness again, crowded with several hundred other letters into so small a space that you will ache all over. The warmth, too, will begin to affect the gum on the stamp, so that it will stick to your face in the most exasperating manner, and you can't shake it off."

"What is the stamp for, anyway?" asked the unsophisticated manuscript, curiously. It had never been out of the drawer in its life, you see.

"Oh! that is to bring you back again if you aren't wanted," answered the other. "Like everybody else that travels, you must have the means with you for getting home again, you know."

"And suppose you don't have to come home? Suppose the editor wants you—what becomes of the stamp then?"

"The editor takes it. Every editor of any importance has a large number of detached stamps in his possession, so that, the post-office people say, he pays very little revenue to Uncle Sam for postal privileges. But a certain portion of the

stamp remains with you always, as you can see by looking at my face. One editor spent fifteen minutes trying to take a stamp away from me, although he knew that I would have to come home again, but he succeeded in getting only a little corner off. Finally he doubled me up wrong side out, and sent me back just as I was. That was the trip when I got so dirty.

"But I must not go ahead so fast. I was just telling you how you were to be started out in the world. The mail carrier will take you in his pouch to the post-office, and there you will go into the hands of the mailing clerk. A most dreadful experience will then happen to you. All of a sudden, when you are least expecting it, you will receive a stinging blow, the scar of which you will probably carry through life. If you look at my back closely you will see several of these cruel marks. The blow is given by a steel machine, and is called 'post-marking.' A round die with letters and figures on it stamps your envelope with the name of the place from which you start, and the exact time and date of your departure. Once in a great while, I have heard, it is possible to read this impression, but generally it is illegible, and is only intended to amuse the mailing clerk and torture you. Before you have recovered from the pain and shock of this blow, you are sent flying through the air into a compartment, where you have a little time to nurse your wounds before you go into the mail-bag. The mail-bag is a great leather affair, that holds more than a bushel of letters, and is closed and locked tightly before leaving the post-office, so that, as far as seeing the world is concerned, you might as well be lying peacefully at home in this dark drawer.

"Pretty soon the mail-bag is tossed into a wagon, and you are rattled away to the mail-car. You get fairly started, and are enjoying the motion as much as your sore back will permit, when the bag is opened, and you feel yourself grasped

and hurled through the air again into a compartment in the side of the car. Then you are rudely stuffed into another mailbag, and here you stay until you reach your journey's end in the city to which you are directed. Then you are given to a mail-carrier, who hurries you off with a lot of other letters, just as heavy and possibly underpaid, as you are, to the editor's sanctum.

"Now there is a difference in editors. If you are sent to the editor of a prominent magazine, you will be treated in the following manner: The editor will open you and glance hurriedly at the superscription of your author. He will then toss you immediately into a large basket and others after you. When the basket is full it will be removed into another room, where a busy young fellow, surrounded on every hand by pens, ink, paper and envelopes, will rapidly tear off the accompanying stamp, and stuff each manuscript into an envelope. In each envelope he will also put a beautifully worded imitation type-writer circular, stating so politely that you aren't wanted, and couldn't possibly be wanted. Then he will address you to your unfortunate author.

"But if you should happen to be sent to a daily or weekly publication, the editor will probably read you, or at least enough of you to know whether you suit his purposes or not. If he does not want you, he will scribble a word or two with a blue pencil on an old scrap of paper—'Declined with thanks,' or 'Too long,' or 'Overcrowded,' and send you on your way again. If he does want you, as I have said, he will pocket your traveling companion and impale you heartlessly on a long spike of steel. This is called 'putting a manuscript on file,' but it is said to be worse than putting you on hot coals. Fortunately, I have never suffered this infliction myself.

"When you come home for the first time, your author is generally very much disappointed, and feels a little hard toward you. You can see it in his eye. But if

he is an old hand at the business he transfers you immediately to a new envelope and addresses you to some other editor, and away you go, to endure the same tortures over again. So it goes, time after time. During all these trips your feelings will be most cruelly outraged. Some editors will laugh you in the face. Others will toss you from them so contemptuously that you will skim half across the floor. Others will take note of your frayed condition and certain ear-marks on your pages, and exclaim, 'Aha!' as though they were very knowing and you very simple and contemptible. If it should happen that for any reason you were not accompanied by a stamp, you would be almost certain of being immediately destroyed, for there is nothing an editor despises like a manuscript which is not adorned with a vignette of the Father of his Country. You may be sure that you will be roughly handled under any circumstances. You are nothing but a sort of beggar at the best. The editor did not invite you to come, and he would have preferred, undoubtedly, to have you stay at home. You are trespassing on his good nature all the time, and can't help feeling it. Of course, it isn't your fault that you came. You couldn't help yourself, and yet you have all the uncomfortable experiences to bear, while your author sits at home and busies his brain over another unfortunate creation. Don't you begin to wish you had not been born a manuscript, my friend?"

"Not a bit of it!" exclaimed the sanguine young manuscript. "I am just aching to see these curious creatures you call editors. I flatter myself I shall make a more favorable impression."

Just then the drawer opened, and the author took out the freshly written manuscript. "Good-bye!" it cried, exultingly. "You won't see me again."

"Good-bye," rustled the frayed old manuscript. "If you aren't back in two weeks, I'll eat my heading." PAUL PASTNOR.

"MY SONNE'S FAIRE WIFE, ELIZABETH."

I'M an old woman, and not given to writing, but I should like to tell you about Elizabeth.

In these days it is the fashion to speak ill of mothers-in-law, and I don't deny that we're often much—oh! very much—in the wrong. Somehow we never can think any woman quite worthy of our boys. We say with Rebekah of old: "If Jacob take to wife a daughter of Heth, what good shall my life do unto me?" But we have loved them so—they have been our own so long, and they leave us so easily. It is all right, I know; only sometimes it seems a little hard. But this isn't getting on with my story.

Elizabeth Vane her name was. You would never think of calling her Lizzie or Bessie. It is a royal name, and right royally she wore it.

It would make a very pretty story, if one only knew the way to tell it, how my son Keith first saw her, as he was riding along the shore on a pleasant country road, just at the sun-setting. It was mid-June, and the wild roses were blossoming everywhere, till all the air was sweet with them. The elders were coming into bloom along the roadside, and the meadows were like velvet. Elizabeth was standing by her father's gateway, looking off over the sea—framed in lush greenery, the delicate sprays of a woodbine drooping above her head, tall and slender and graceful in her white dress, the sunset making a glory of her golden hair—the loveliest woman he had ever seen, I have heard him say.

Next day at the house where he was dining, he met her father; and when Malcolm Vane knew that my son Keith was of the Ardens, of Beechcroft, whom he himself had known in his boyish days, he welcomed him to his home, and before

the woodbine leaves were red Elizabeth was wooed and won.

But Malcolm Vane had been sorely ill for many years, and was failing fast; so, when the first snows came, and he felt his end was near, he earnestly desired to leave his one daughter in her husband's care; and by his bedside Elizabeth became my son Keith's wife. And, not many days later, Malcolm Vane "fell on sleep."

But when first my son had told me of his betrothal, and had brought me Elizabeth's picture, saying how fair and womanly she was, and I had written to her, and there had come in return such a sweet and tender letter—I have it even yet—when first I knew of this, I say, I had begun to make preparations to leave the house at Beechcroft for the Lodge, which had been untenanted of late. And I won't deny that it was hard to go from the home where I had come as bride, and reigned supreme so many years—the house full of memories of *my* Keith, so long gone, and our lost little ones; for Keith, my son, alone remains of four. I had been rarely happy there. I had had my day, and it was over. Now it was Elizabeth Vane's turn.

The Lodge was a very pretty, vine-covered place, with a nice little garden of its own, and bright and sunshiny within. We made it very comfortable and cozy; and I took with me, for my one maid, Becky Hurst, who had been at Beechcroft since my first coming; and young Fergus, the gardener's son, a big, good-natured, clumsy lad, to care for the little garden and do the heavier work; also in some sort for a protection, being always used to having a man about the house.

Seven peaceful years went by. Gentle and womanly Elizabeth was, indeed, and ever thoughtful and considerate for me.

And then so fair! fairer than ever now in her young matronhood, with her children about her—another Keith, so like his father, a gallant little Malcolm, and baby Elinor, my name-child.

When little Elinor was two years old, it became necessary for my son to go abroad on business that no one else could so well attend to, and, sorely against his will, he left us, and we missed him sadly.

Not many days after his going, one soft, golden September morning, as I sat on the porch with my knitting, a woman came wearily along the road. So ill and worn she looked, that I bade her come in and rest awhile. Becky brought her milk and food; and while she rested she told us her story—a sad one enough—and that she was going on to the town, where she had a daughter who would care for her. So when she was somewhat refreshed she went her way, and we never saw her more.

But when some days had passed, Becky, who was always hale and strong, began to complain of not being quite well. She thought the heat had tired her, and at last decided, if I didn't mind, she would go to her sister's, some miles away, and rest a few days; and, as I was not quite well myself, and feared I couldn't nurse her if she fell ill, I consented, and it was arranged that I should stay with Elizabeth meanwhile. I did not feel quite easy to have Becky go when the day came, she seemed so poorly; but she was sure it was best, especially as I was still ailing. After she was gone I felt so ill and depressed, I lay down to rest before going up to the house, and fell asleep.

I was wakened by a rapping at the porch door, and went to it, feeling strangely faint, and saw Dr. Kent standing there, which surprised me much, he being a busy man, and not used to calling socially. He seemed graver than his wont, especially when I mentioned that Becky had gone away ill, when he questioned me of my ailing. After awhile he

told me of having been called to a poor woman in the town who had talked much of a lady who had been kind to her. Was it here that she had stopped? Then, as I assented, he said again, "She is ill in the town;" and suddenly I knew what it all meant, and cried out: "It was small-pox, and Becky and I have taken it."

He tried to reassure me then, I think, but I did not listen, only sat there, bewildered and dazed, with the words I had said ringing in my ears, for I know not how long. After a little, I knew that he was telling me not to be so alarmed, for I might not be very ill. He would send a capable nurse at once who would serve me faithfully, and we should do well. And he would see "Mrs. Keith" at once and charge her, from me, not to come down, and to take care of the children. I might be well assured that the best that could be should be done in all things. So he went away, promising to return speedily.

Soon the woman came, a tidy body enough; and when I had given her what directions I could about the house, I fell asleep once more. When I wakened, the room was dim, and some one sat by the window. I saw who it was, and cried out trembling, "Elizabeth! Elizabeth! go away at once! You do not know!"

She came to me, quietly, kneeling by me, and putting her hand on mine: "I do know," she said; "Dr. Kent has told me, and I am come to care for you." But I drew myself away and cried out wildly:

"You must not! you shall not! I shall do very well! I have the nurse—"

"The woman will stay and take care of the house," she interrupted, but no one but myself shall nurse Keith's mother."

"But the children; think of the children!"

"The children are perfectly well, and nurse will take good care of them," she answered, smiling; "I shall hear from them every day."

"And Keith," I moaned; but she hushed me with a firm tone—

"Keith will say I did perfectly right."

"But I cannot *let* you stay," I cried; "think if you should take it yourself."

"I do not think I shall," she said, calmly; "and if I do, you shall nurse me."

And then I broke down and cried: "O my dear! my dear! and you so pretty!"

"Keith will care for me just the same," she said, with her clear eyes shining. "Do you think his wife could leave his mother alone?" And then she took me in her arms as if I had been little Elinor and comforted me.

So she stayed, and all through that dark and dreadful time, in my delirium, still I knew her beside me; and when consciousness came to me at last, her face was the first that I saw—paler, perhaps, but fairer and sweeter than ever to me; and I knew that the tide had turned, and she had saved my life.

And did she take it? Never a touch of it. After I was convalescent she took me to the seaside awhile, and meantime my house was taken in hand and thoroughly renovated.

When I was quite strong, and there was no more danger of infection, we went back to Beechcroft and to the children, all well and hearty, thank God!—and never was there anything prettier to see than that meeting.

A little later my son Keith came home after a prosperous journey, and then Becky, well and strong again—though she had been nearly as ill as I—and the Lodge was opened for us once more and all things went on peacefully as of old, only I think we were all more than ever thankful.

No one will doubt that I love my one son with all my heart; but even so dear to me is my son's wife, Elizabeth.

RUTH HAYS.

"A LOVE-SET."

(See next page.)

LOVE-SET," she cried, "six games to none!"

He smiled and seemed no whit dismayed:

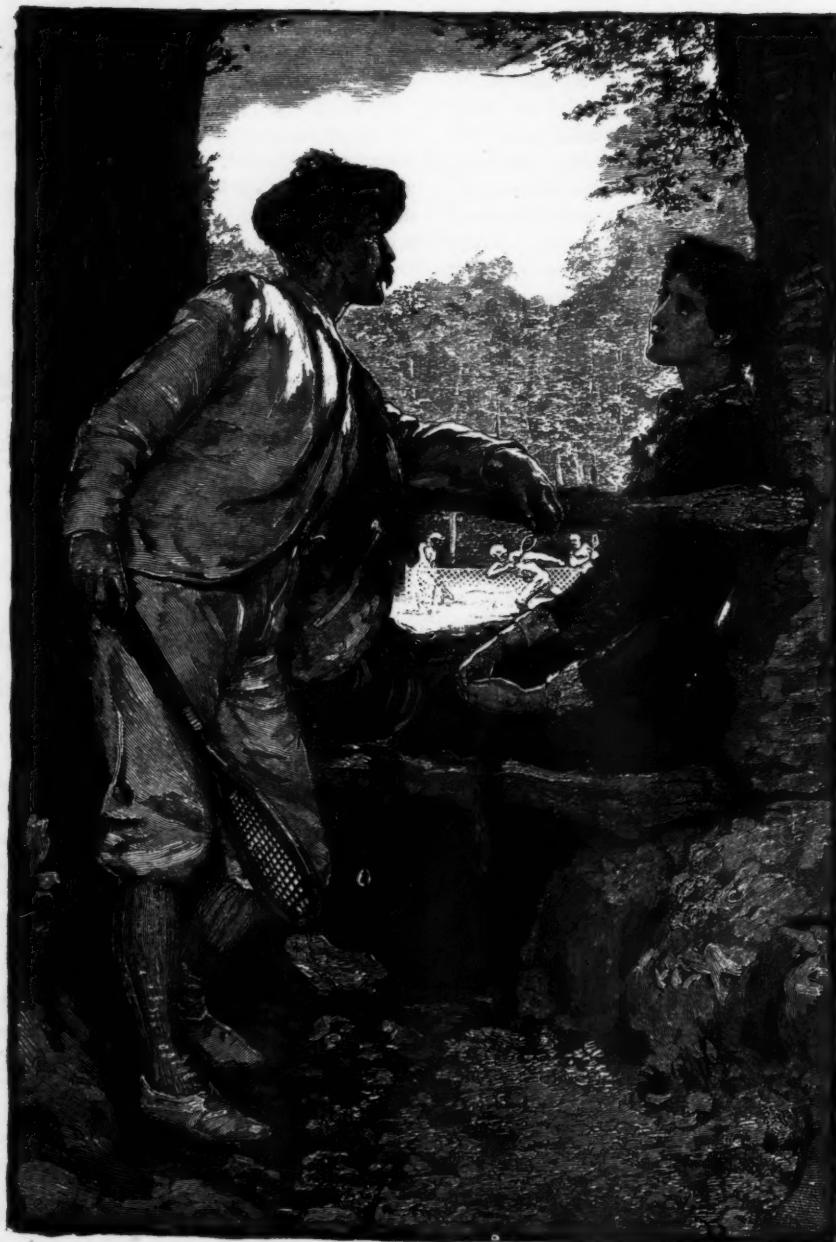
Defeat like this was naught to one

Who for a sweeter victory played.

Then, leaving all the merry throng
Of tennis-players on the lawn,
Beneath the trees they lingered long,
While Love, glad Love, began to dawn.

A glance, a pressure of the hand—
And, ere the sky had lost its gold,
A newer glory filled the land:
The old, old tale of love was told.

And then, "Love-set," he whispered low;
"Love-set to me this time, my sweet!"
While she but smiled upon her foe,
And seemed to welcome her defeat.



"BENEATH THE TREES THY LINGERED LONG."

MARGARET'S FRENZY.

IT was an unlucky day for me—though I was not born till ten years afterward—when that big cellar door slammed to, and nipped off the end of Margaret's little finger at the early age of seven.

Margaret was passionately fond of music, but she could not sing, and her encounter with the door prevented her from being a first-rate performer on the piano. She would not content herself with anything short of perfection; and so for years long and many the music within her found no utterance. At last, after a few gray hairs began to show themselves among her thick brown braids, Professor Mohr advised her to learn the violin.

We were spending some happy years together in Germany, Margaret playing the rôle of guardian grimalkin to my kittenish innocence. We were not related, but as inseparable as the celebrated Ladies of Llangollen. I took drawing lessons, and we were both deep in languages. In our free hours we were careless and happy as lambs in clover, until Professor Mohr's unlucky suggestion started us on the high road to despair.

We were staying in Munich when this misfortune overtook us. Margaret was fired with enthusiasm at the thought of possibly being a good musician at last. She was past thirty, and for a while tortured herself with fears that this was too old to begin to learn anything so difficult as the violin. But they raked up for her benefit many instances of musical prodigies turned out late in life, to the astonishment of the world and themselves. Perseverance, aptitude, and health would do wonders.

Convinced at last of the wisdom of her undertaking, and radiant with hope, Margaret engaged a master at more marks an hour than would have paid for half a

week of operas in the *Gallerie Noble*. She next commissioned some old virtuosi and dealers in musical instruments to ferret out for her a good violin from beneath the dust and rubbish of ages. No easy matter this: for Margaret had read deeply on the subject, and would be content with nothing of a later date than the seventeenth century; and the graining of the cunningly mosaiced sycamore must undulate under its golden varnish "like the setting summer sun on cloud and wave."

At the expiration of a week, Herr Bratwurst wrote from the Tyrol, describing with flowery extravagance the jewel of an instrument he had unearthed at Brixen, among the goods and chattels of an Israelitish gentleman in the old clothes business. When found, this prize was a wreck, gone to pieces under billows of flimsy satin gowns, and theatrical coats of cotton velvet; but carefully set together by the magic hand of a Bratwurst, it was worthy of Tarisio himself. A fragment at the back bore the precious inscription, "Antonius Stradivarius, Cremonensis, Faciebat Anno 1654."

And a portion of the instrument at least might be regarded as the work of this master. It was in shape a "Long Strad," and was a marvelous combination of sycamore, Swiss pine, and lemon tree. The varnish was a delight to the eye, and the tone—but here words failed for description.

The supreme moment arrived when Margaret was to see this wonder, and decide whether or not she might call it her own. It seemed like opening a long-buried coffin, they were so serious about undoing its box, which looked so worn and shabby.

Margaret was speechless with delight when Professor Mohr played upon it,

went into technical raptures, and eventually paid for it, smilingly, the price of two good pianos. Connoisseurs, even those not interested, said it closely resembled an authentic Stradivarius, and as such was a bargain; so I kept my surprise locked in my ignorant bosom.

Margaret bought for her jewel a beautiful polished and inlaid mahogany case, lined with blue velvet. I, in a burst of enthusiasm, embroidered a fiddle-blanket of fine blue cloth, on which I executed in gold thread the treble clef, and Margaret's initials, M. A. C., in beautiful silks. A spray of flowers was depicted beneath, and I thought the whole thing a masterpiece of originality and skill. It was lined with satin, quilted, wadded, and perfumed; and the case, with its blanket, would have made a nice bed for one of the roly-poly Bavarian princelings we saw in the street with their squadron of nursemaids.

Strange, uncouth sounds began now to issue from our little dwelling. It was a musical atmosphere where we lived, and people were prepared for the spasmodic wailing and sharp spiteful yells produced by a beginner on the violin. Otherwise I should have been ashamed.

Margaret worked with a feverish energy, and I must confess that she made rapid progress. From early morning till as late at night as the police regulations allowed, she fiddled as if for her life. She sawed the empty air with her bow to exercise certain elbow-muscles; played before the mirror to break herself of making hideous faces, which caused me great delight; racked her brains over harmony, and split her own ears and mine with studies ahead of her capacity. Her energy drove me to greater activity in my drawing, which, however, did not bring increased pleasure. There must have been something wrong in my character that I was not happier for this furious emulation of the busy bee. Margaret often said, with a shake of the head:

"If I were eighteen, like you, Kate, in-

stead of twice that age, I would make something of myself."

Then, ashamed of neglecting my opportunities, I would go up on the roof and sketch clouds, while the other girls went off for a ramble in the solitude.

We gave up going to drink coffee of an afternoon in the Hof Garten. The band there was all brass, and Margaret was mad after strings. We trailed to Symphony concerts till I was bored to death, and Margaret looked victimized in the picture-galleries where formerly we had spent such happy hours together. I began to rue the day that she decided to become famous, and a jealous hatred of the fiddle arose within me. It had already spoiled half my pleasure in Margaret's society, and she grew daily more absorbed in the senseless thing. If relief did not come from some quarter soon, our friendship of years was likely to go to pieces.

These superhuman labors began to tell on Margaret, after awhile, and her teacher advised her to take a few weeks' rest in the Tyrol. I gladly agreed to accompany her, and our preparations for the trip were quickly made. I was secretly in raptures at the thought of getting rid of my enemy, the fiddle, for awhile; but alas! I was doomed to disappointment. While arranging our hand luggage in as compact a form as possible, I learned that the violin was to accompany us.

"But, Margaret, you need rest. Why not leave the violin here in safe hands, and return to it refreshed?" I said, hypocritically.

"I should lose in a week all I have toiled for through months," she said, with a reproachful glance; and I demurred no longer.

Margaret then began to solemnly roll the instrument of torture in a yard of flannel, cover it further with my blanket and an old silk handkerchief of generous dimensions, draw a green baize bag over the resplendent mahogany case, and, fast-

ening a shawl-strap round the whole, declared it ready for its travels.

My fears that the fiddle would be a marplot throughout our journey were not without foundation, and I soon realized that as a trip for rest and recreation, ours was turning out a failure. From the start Margaret bewildered and overwhelmed with admonitions every porter and railway official who laid hold of the baize bag with its precious contents, watching them with lynx eyes and trotting along beside any in whose glance gleamed the unlawful fire of covetousness.

At Rosenau there was a collision between the baize bag and a brass-nailed trunk, and a hole was stove in the side of the former. When Margaret found a big scratch on the mahogany case, she sat down on a truck and wept openly. As we were to tarry a few days at Rosenau, I begged my companion to have a stout box of common wood made for the fiddle to continue its journey in, and send the too magnificent receptacle back to Munich.

To this she consented, and when we again set forth the precious instrument reposed in a black pine box of gruesome shape. It was heavily and clumsily made, with a key as big as Mrs. Bluebeard's; it looked very like a small coffin; but it was cheap, and strong enough to resist any amount of ill-usage.

We stopped a fortnight or more at Haidenfeld, in the Southern Tyrol; a pretty, restful nook, with a deep lake walled in by cloud-high mountains, a half-ruined monastery, about which a few spectral monks still hovered, and an enticing maze of walks through heather and fragrant pine. A place for people not fiddle-ridden to enjoy every moment.

Margaret was not in the mood to enjoy the beauties of nature. Evening after evening I sat alone in our little balcony, watching the icy crest of the Adlerberg flush an exquisite pink in the setting sun, and pale again to silvery white. I longed

for my friend's ear into which to pour my extravagant delight in this scene; but she was in the back room wrestling with a flageolet tone or some other intricacy she feared might escape her.

I saw clearly that Margaret's vacation was doing her no good, and I was uneasy for her health. The study of the violin was a great strain upon the strongest nerves, and Margaret had always been rather delicate. We had both fallen under a baleful, uncanny influence, and I devoutly wished that Professor Mohr and Herr Bratwurst might have played golden harps in Heaven before lashing Margaret into this fiddle-frenzy.

While my rival absorbed the greater part of Margaret's time, I was forced to shift for myself and make the most of whatever amusement fell in my way. A good-looking young fellow, with curly black hair standing straight up from his forehead and the merriest blue eyes I ever saw, seemed to understand my hard lot, and did his best to ameliorate it.

Our acquaintance began by my inadvertently stepping on him as he lay half asleep in the shadow of some hawthorn bushes. His name was Herbert Stacy. He was studying sculpture, and he too was taking a holiday rest in the Tyrol. We happened to have some friends in common, so our acquaintance was quite proper, and I must confess that after it began I felt a little less preyed upon by the violin.

Margaret smiled benignly enough on incipient flirtation, but her thoughts soared above us, and she let us take frequent rambles alone. I knew that the Haidensee was a beautiful intense blue, and that the rhododendron covered the hard cheeks of the mountains with a rich, lovely blush, but I did not seem half to appreciate these glories till Mr. Stacy pointed them out to me.

One day he told me, with evident regret, that he was obliged to set out for Venice the next day. Queen Marghe-

rita's birthday was approaching. There was to be a *fête* of unusual magnificence on the Grand Canal, and Mr. Stacy had promised some relatives of his to be with them during this celebration. It was an odd fancy, going to Venice in the summer, but the journey was not very long, and their stay would be of brief duration.

So our little idyl was to end abruptly, and I should be left alone again. We had quite an affecting parting; Mr. Stacy kissed my hand very tenderly, in Continental fashion, which I liked very much.

We exchanged souvenirs. I gave him a coin from my bangle, and he presented me with a holly-wood bear supporting a thermometer. The mercury in this was defective, pointing always to sixty-five degrees, whatever the changes of temperature, but I prized it far above my other treasures.

My Uncle Robert was to be in Venice for this same *fête*, I had heard, and so I gave his address to Mr. Stacy, thinking they might like to meet. The latter seemed pleased, and said he would look up my relative without fail. How I wished Margaret and I might go too! But my slender purse would not permit so expensive a journey. Margaret could go; but she, out of kindly consideration for me, always cut her coat according to my meagre supply of cloth, instead of indulging in the ample garment her means allowed.

After Herbert Stacy went, Haidenberg seemed unbearably dull, and at my request Margaret and I wandered to fresh pastures a little farther south. Here I received a letter which sent me soaring into the seventh heaven of delight. Uncle Robert sent me a generous check, and begged Margaret and me to join him at Venice for the *fête*. His wife's niece, Miss Laurie, was with him, and we should doubtless enjoy each other's society.

I remembered Madge Laurie as an unconscionable flirt, about three years older than I. I didn't like her at all then, but

now I was willing to consort with any one for the sake of a glimpse at Venice and all its gayeties at that season. And best of all, Herbert Stacy was to be there, and we should meet again! How lucky that I was going; otherwise there would be no one to prevent Madge Laurie from getting him into her toils. I felt myself a match for her now.

Uncle Robert gave us minute directions about our route over the mountains by diligence, and by train from Belluno; we must be very exact in our arrangements, or we should all miss each other. He was obliged to be in Verona at a certain date, and could not tarry in Venice a day after the *fête*. We must notify him at once whether he might expect us or not, and if we could not arrive surely by the seventeenth we had better remain quietly where we were.

A diligence left that very hour which would take our answer, and the next morning we could start, arriving at noon of the seventeenth if all went well.

This most promising of journeys began very auspiciously on a cool, delicious morning. We mounted to the coupé places in the diligence; the driver, a saucy-eyed fellow with a bunch of rhododendron in his hat, bared his head, mumbled a prayer, and crossed himself before he took the reins. We started off at a fine pace over a road like a marble floor.

Even to us wayfarers who had grown quite familiar with the grand plunge and roar of an avalanche, the giddy fall of glacier torrents, the plumy pines, jauntily worn cloud-veils and other mountain-millinery, this drive would be for all time a memorable one. Italy lapped over into the Tyrol and gave the people dark lustrous eyes, lithe figures, a graceful port, and picturesqueness of costume long before we left Austrian territory.

Near Croce Bianca a pathetic incident occurred. A wan-looking woman came out from a cottage and walked slowly toward us, bearing a small black box on

her head. She said a few sentences in Italian to our guard, who reverently pushed the rough little coffin in among the luggage at the back of the diligence. He afterward told us that it contained the body of a baby who had died the previous day. Its mother, fatally ill at the cottage, had begged that it might be buried at Pieve di Cadore, her birthplace, where she had friends who would receive it.

It was quite out of the ordinary custom to make the diligence a funeral car for a peasant baby; but regulations were elastic in that part of the world, and our guard seemed ready to risk reproof in order to gratify a dying woman's wish.

Pieve di Cadore, the birthplace of Titian, as well as of the poor woman who had lost her baby, was a mile or more distant from the diligence road. For passengers wishing to visit this place an omnibus was sent to the cross-roads; those more prosaically inclined remaining at an inn for dinner and repose.

We were among the latter, and, after taking refreshment, watched at our ease from afar the bustle of changing horses and men, and escorting travelers and luggage from one conveyance to the other. At nightfall we reached Marina, where we were provided with supper, and a room decorated with pictures of saints in smiling torture.

The next morning, as we had some hours to spare before resuming our journey, Margaret astonished me by sending for her violin.

"You don't mean to say you have brought the fiddle on this expedition, of all others!" I exclaimed blankly.

"Of course I brought it. It would not have been safe otherwise, and I was not sure we should return by this route. I bade the waiter put it in the diligence without your knowledge, as I sometimes fancied it annoyed you."

"Very well," I returned, resignedly. "I will go out for a walk while you prac-

tice." And I suited the action to the word with further delay.

My thoughts were very cheerful companions. The next afternoon would find us in Venice; the day following would be a red-letter one for all the year: the birthday *fête*, the wonders of the marine city, meeting again Herbert Stacy. All was like a delicious dream, short and sweet as dreams are, but amply worth any fatigue and discomfort which the journey might cause.

When I returned from my walk, I found Margaret in floods of tears, pacing the room distractedly and wringing her hands in undisguised distress. When she could control her voice she told me a woeful tale.

When I went out she had sent for the violin. After some unaccountable delay, a man appeared, bringing a black box, which was like—and yet strangely unlike—the fiddle case.

"A creepy feeling ran down my back as I looked at it," she said. "I sent the man to look again, but he declared there was no other black box among the luggage except a hat-case. He grew quite violent about it, and I suppose I was excited, too, for the truth was beginning to dawn upon me. Finally, he ran away and got a screwdriver, opened the box, and started back with an exclamation which confirmed my worst fears. It contained that poor little baby, looking as beautiful and peaceful as anything you can imagine."

"How dreadful! But you must have recovered from the shock now, Margaret, dear?"

"Shock? You don't seem to realize that they have buried my violin."

I dropped limply into a chair.

"There is not a moment to lose," Margaret continued. "I must take the first conveyance back to Pieve. It breaks my heart to have you go on alone to Venice, and I shall feel uneasy about you every moment. But what can I do? Oh! dear, dear; was ever anything so distressing!"

"Couldn't we leave the fiddle till after our trip?"

"How can you make such a wild suggestion, Kate? It would be ruined by lying so long in the damp earth. Prompt action may possibly save it from being buried at all. No, I must go at once to the rescue."

I saw that remonstrance would be perfectly useless; Margaret would be frantic if restrained. She could not go back to Pieve alone, because to explain her mission there, Italian would be necessary, and Margaret had not learned the language, which I spoke well. She had befriended me to her own inconvenience in a thousand instances already, and it was plainly my duty to stand by her now. She did not know how great the sacrifice would be for me, for I had not told her of my hope of meeting Herbert Stacy.

After a brief, bitter conflict with myself, I said: "I will go back to Pieve with you." And as I uttered these words I felt mentally all the torture which the wriggling saints on the wall expressed in their bodies.

"But, dear child, you will miss the *fête*; there is not time for both."

"Never mind that. I didn't feel much interest in it, anyway. It was the—the scenery I liked, and we have had the best of that already." I was determined to play my part of martyr gracefully, even at the expense of truth.

"How good of you, Kate! I hated more than words can express to go alone among all those queer people. I couldn't explain my mission, and they would probably think me a murderer. Never mind! I will take you to Venice next year, if I have to go in rags to accomplish it."

"Alas! next year there will be no Herbert," I thought, regretfully.

An ill-assorted pair of steeds attached to an antiquated vehicle took us and the poor baby back to Pieve at an irritating

jog-trot. I didn't care whether Titian was born there, or born at all, for that matter, and I vouchsafed hardly a glance at his house as we passed. I was too downcast and disappointed (though I strove to conceal my feelings from Margaret) even to feel amusement at the ridiculous errand upon which we had come.

It was as Margaret feared; the black box containing the violin had been taken by mistake from the diligence, received and wept over as holding the baby; and as such had been buried, with an accompaniment of wax tapers and dyed *immortelles*, the previous afternoon.

Our story collected about us what seemed to be the whole village, open-eyed, open-mouthed; and these features, when Italian, can accomplish wondrous flashing and chattering under excitement.

The veritable baby was followed to the churchyard by a procession which would have delighted the soul of its mother, could the poor woman have seen it.

After Margaret and I had undergone, from judicial authority, a fire of cross-questioning, beginning with the maiden name of our respective mothers, and ending with our opinion of Tyrolean scenery, the men we had engaged were allowed to raze the little mound which covered Margaret's treasure.

As the grave was opened, a great many blue linen aprons were pressed to fine dark eyes, sobs broke from linen-covered bosoms hung with chains of more or less claims to sterling worth, and heads wreathed in black braids thrust through with silver pins bobbed to and fro with emotion. This exhibition of sentiment seemed out of place over the remains of a fiddle, but it was easier for the peasant women to weep over a grave, as was their wont, than to discriminate.

The box was taken out, and even Margaret admitted that the violin appeared to be uninjured. We waited while they buried the poor little baby; and I think our offering of a big bunch of garden roses

raised us to the rank of royalty in the estimation of the simple folk of Pieve.

Three months later, when our Tyrolean trip was of the past, and lessons had begun again in Munich, Uncle Robert wrote me bitter news. Madge Laurie was engaged to Mr. Herbert Stacy, a very

agreeable fellow whom they had met in Venice.

I thereupon gave the mendacious hollywood bear to Gretchen, our chambermaid, and told Leonard he might walk home with me from the lectures on Perspective.

He need never know that I use him as salve to patch my broken heart.

THE PASSING YEARS.

THE years are perfect poems!

Along the lines of law

Jehovah writes,

In shades and lights,

Without a single flaw;

The seasons with their changes

All move in faultless rhymes,

As bells that swing

Together ring

Their clear and silver chimes.

And I fancy the flowers, unfolding,
Uplift their starry eyes

To the far blue height,

And read aright

The songs in the summer skies;

And I think the stars of heaven

Look down to this world of ours

Through the hush of night,

And plain to their sight

Are the poems written in flowers.

Roll on! O years of brightness!
In bloom and beauty, roll!

Your anthems sweet,

In rhymes complete,

Are breathing in my soul;

Your showers and sunbeams falling

Are of my life a part,

Each voice that breaks

The silence wakes

The echoes in my heart.

Roll on! your cycles keeping

As perfect time and tune

When tempests blow

O'er drifted snow

As under skies of June.

Your measured months are dropping

Like notes of music sweet,

And soft and clear

Upon my ear—

Oh! how my pulses beat!

In marches most majestic

Move on! we're drawing near

The age of gold,

So long foretold—

The morn is breaking clear—

God's purposes, unfolding

Through centuries of gloom,

Like opening flowers

In sunny bower,

Are bursting into bloom!

WILLIAM J. SHAW.

A MILL OF THE GODS.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small,
Though with patience stands He waiting,
With exactness grinds He all."

THE soul of the Indian summer brooded over all the land, and the smoky breath of the Great Spirit's pipe of peace floated in and about the tinted trees, flaunting in their bright dying colors, and spread over the distant hills a mantle of misty blue vapor. Peace and plenty reigned supreme, quietness and rest had settled down upon the face of nature, the busy, ever-working spring, the full, ever-ripening summer, had completed their fruitful task, and vine-clad autumn had garnered into his storehouse the fruition of all the year; so the world of nature, as well as that of humanity, rested from its labors, reaping the reward of earnest effort crowned with success.

Whether or no this aspect of nature appealed especially to the soul of Margery Moore is a question which would probably have been answered in the negative, could a mirror have reflected the temper of her mind, for she was a practical little soul, and the probabilities were that had an artist pointed out that which he saw through his spectacles, she would have gazed at him in round-eyed wonder, and set him down as a harmless crank.

Nevertheless, romance had not been absent from her life, but then the difference between Miss Clarinda, perhaps, and Margery Moore was, that whereas Miss Clarinda would have named it "romance," and waxed sentimentally doleful over it, Margery Moore called it "hard luck," and turned to her life and its homely duties as a matter of course, and as something not to be set aside. There had been a time when the very sun was darkened for Margery, when life was made

unendurable by harsh treatment and cruel neglect from the man for whom she had given up home and friends, when the culminating point was reached by desertion of her natural protector, and she found herself cast helpless upon the world, scarcely more than a child in years, and certainly nothing more than a child in experience. Then it was that she had found her ark of refuge in the home of a woman whose large heart and loving charity opened out to the poor, forlorn child, bearing thus bitterly the lesson of life's experience.

A year passed swiftly by, and the quiet routine of the farm duties, the unobtrusive sympathy surrounding her, and, above all, the love of three-years-old Jeanette, soothed and healed the spirit of Margery Moore, and restored to her much of her light-heartedness. But sunshine does not last forever, and there came a day within the farmhouse when the twin angels of Life and Death entered the house, the one departing with the spirit of the mother borne aloft on his mighty wings, and the other remaining in the frame of a little, wailing infant lying in the arms of Margery Moore, who strained the motherless baby to her heart, well-nigh breaking with love and grief.

Then had Gregory Somers stood up, and, taking both her brown hands in his, looked into her eyes, saying:

"Will you leave me now, Margery?"

And Margery, with her true heart shining through her look, replied:

"Your wife was a mother to me when, God knows, I needed friends bad enough, and who but you, yourself, Gregory Somers, held out a hand to me in my distress? Do you believe me to be less grateful than your dog, who gives you his faith for your care? I will stay here, and

strive to do for you and yours as you already have done for me, and as I deal by you, so also may the Lord deal out His measure to me."

Whereupon the bereaved husband took heart again, and went about his life in the same old, quiet, kindly way as hitherto.

Time sped swiftly and quietly away at the farm, Margery's loving service going far to fill the awful gap caused by death, the children thriving and growing like field-flowers under the fostering sunshine of her care, and to add to her sense of security no disturbing news ever came to her from the outside world. To all intents and purposes, Ellison Moore might have been dead and buried, as perhaps indeed he was. Once in awhile this thought lifted up its head in Margery's heart, and was chidden back in fearful haste, as she almost trembled with joy at the faintest prospect of such a release. Can we blame her? Is a human heart but a light plaything, to be tossed aside at another's convenience? A heart! do we always stop to think what "a heart" means? It is a whole *world*, containing within itself infinite possibilities of everything in life, the mainspring of the emotions, the bubbling well of energy, the vital point of all life's effort. Can such a thing then be trampled on, bruised, and broken, without a revolt throughout its entire nature? God forbid! for man is above the sphere of other animals, and the spark of divinity within his soul keeps him from sinking to their lower level.

The long, bright summer afternoon was drawing to a close, and shadows crept lazily on, lengthening as they advanced. The soft breezes flowing down from the distant hills and across the nearer water, brought with them a delicious coolness, sweeping away the heat and business of the day from both mind and body. A year and a half had passed since Jeanette Somers had drifted into that strange coun-

try, "from whose bourne no traveler returns," and her children, with the pathetic forgetfulness of youth, recognized none other as mother save the girl whose fostering care had ever shielded their young lives.

This afternoon she sits in the little boat, moored among the hedges of the lakeside, swaying with its movement, gazing with loving, careful eyes on her charges, and softly singing a low refrain to the splash of the water and its ripple on the shore. Does any premonition of impending storm cast its shadow upon her that she looks up with a slight shudder, or is it but a cooler breeze blowing from some damp cave among the far-away hills that strikes her more keenly than before? And yet, far over those hills, Fate comes nearer, step by step, ever drawing closer in and around her the net of circumstance, which at times proves too powerful for the strongest among us; step by step it comes, nearer and nearer, in the travel-stained figure of a man, who plods patiently along in the direction of Gregory Somers's farm; a little behind him rides the master of the farm, his reins hanging loosely on the neck of his horse as he toils up the steep hillside. Evidently he sees at last the figure of the pedestrian ahead, and noting the weary step he whipped up his horse with hospitable intent and shouted:

"Will you ride a piece, stranger? We seem bound in the same direction, and you walk as if you had come a goodish step and were pretty well fagged out."

"That's the truth, sure as you're living, squire," replied the man addressed, turning to the speaker and discovering a lowering countenance.

The next moment he had, in obedience to Gregory's invitation, jumped into the wagon and seated himself beside him. Gregory cast more than one sidelong glance at his companion, who was anything but prepossessing in appearance, his face bearing unmistakable traces of bad temper and vice.

Finally the silence was broken by a question that caused Gregory Somers to straighten up, take a tighter grip on his reins and whip, and stand mentally on the alert.

"Are you going near the farm of a man called Somers, who lives hereabouts?" spoke the coarse voice of the stranger.

"What's his given name?" replied Gregory; "there is many about here of that name. Which one do you mean?"

"He's a man called Gregory, or something of that sounding," was the reply.

Involuntarily Gregory Somers started; what could this man want with him? And then a cold hand seemed to clutch his very heartstrings as he thought of Margery Moore. Was there a possibility that this man might be her husband? Great heavens! the thought seemed more than he could bear. In one flash arose a vision of his desolate home, his doubly orphaned children, and as like a flood of light let into a darkened room, and showing the hidden corners, was the revelation of his ever worshipful love for this tender, devoted woman. What? this man who has come near to wreck her life and murder her happiness, who by his brutal instinct and action had forfeited his moral right to influence her life one hair's breadth either way, was he to force away from him the woman who had stood by him in loyal deed through sorrow and pain? Nay! and he shook with the deep passion of his resolve, he would *never* give her up; he would hold her in her happy home in defiance of this brute force; aye, even of the law itself.

Recalled to himself by the look of curiosity on his companion's face, he answered with an effort:

"Yes; I am right to his gate. What might you want with Gregory Somers?"

"Taint much I want with him," coarsely answered the man; "but there's a woman working for him that I want."

"What's her name?" shortly asked Gregory, biting his lip.

"Moore—Margery Moore," replied the man, smiling disagreeably.

"Yes, I know her," was the short answer; "but I can't tell you whether you can see her, for she don't see folks generally, for she's shy like and afraid of strangers."

"Well, sir," said the man with an oath, bringing down his clinched hand in emphasis, "I guess she'll see me, or I'll know the reason why."

Gregory, stung to the quick by the tone, turned quickly: "Who might you be that speaks so of Margery Moore?" he said, with a dangerous light in his eyes.

"Well, I just happen to be her husband, stranger, that's all; but I guess it gives me all the right I want."

"Ah! you bought her, I suppose," shortly replied Somers, "perhaps, though, you may be speaking of a steer or a bullock, instead of your wife."

The man turned with a brutal look.

"Curse ye," he growled. "Who are you? I'd like to know what business it is of yours, anyway. I'll not have any one coming between me and my wife. I'll break their neck for them if they do, remember that, stranger."

Gregory Somers laughed, contemptuously.

The man at his side, taking him unawares, caught him by the throat, and shook him like a child.

In one moment Gregory Somers had released himself, had dragged his assailant out of the wagon, and blows from his riding-whip fell thick and fast about Ellison Moore's head and shoulders. A far superior man physically than his adversary, Gregory held him down with a grip in which the other writhed and twisted ineffectually, until finally, pausing for want of breath, he flung him crashing into a heap of blackberry bushes at the side of the road.

Then came the reaction, and Gregory recognized, with the bitterness of death, that here he was powerless; that not a

shadow of legal right rested on his side to strengthen the cause of his pleading heart : and bitterer than all was the thought that perhaps by his very impetuosity he had rendered life harder still for the woman whom he loved. Yes, *loved*, for he made now no secret of this, his new-found treasure. Animated by this feeling, and swallowing his disgust as well as he could, he advanced toward the dust-covered figure of his adversary, and spoke sorrowfully :

" I had no business to forget myself so, stranger, but I aint used to be handled so roughly, and when I felt your hands on me I couldn't help myself; I always was so even as a boy. I am that same Gregory Somers that you are looking for, and it maddened me to hear you speak of Margery Moore as you did, for I know so well her sweet temper;" he stopped suddenly, turning away his head, then continued, not noticing the sinister smile on Moore's face. " If you are her husband, as you say, you will see her, but, look you, she it is who shall choose for herself, not you or me that will do that for her," and resuming his place in the wagon, he motioned Ellison Moore to the seat beside him, driving in absolute silence down into the valley and to the very presence itself of Margery Moore, who, perceiving them at a distance, stood in the doorway, with a smile on her face, to greet them.

Gregory Somers, watching her intently, saw all too plainly that the man at his side had spoken the truth, for gradually the happy look died out of the woman's face, which slowly froze into a stare of fright and loathing ; then, putting up her hands before her eyes, as though to shut out of her sight some horrifying vision, she uttered a heart-broken cry, and disappeared within the cool shadow of the house.

Ellison Moore turned and gazed upon the set face of the grief-stricken man at his side with a sneering smile on his mean face, but it was unnoticed by Somers, who

threw down his reins, and quickly followed Margery into the house.

She laid prostrate, stricken down like an animal by the bullet of the hunter ; bending over her, Gregory raised her tenderly, his whole nature in revolt against this monstrous injustice.

" O my love! look up," he whispered ; " have courage, my darling, O my darling ! for I will protect you with my life."

Through all her dumb anguish flashed the glory of a great joy, that the next moment went out, leaving deeper darkness than before. She threw back her head and looked long and earnestly into the eyes that met her own fearlessly, proudly, tenderly. One long look passed between them, and then strength came to her—strength to tread the path of duty and put from her this delicious draught of happiness ; strength to go into the life that spread out its thorny path before her, devoid of sunshine, beset with trial and awful fear ; strength through the very power of her love for this man to leave him, though her heart lay broken at his feet.

" I must go with *him*," she whispered.

" Ah God ! what shall I do ?" wailed the man. It was the woman who was the strongest now.

" I cannot tell," moaned Margery—" I cannot tell what we both shall do."

Then they looked each in the face of the other, seeing only great love and white despair ; then they kissed, as one might kiss on whom the hand of Death was laid, and hand-in-hand they faced her husband together.

" Ellison Moore, you treated me more like a dog than a woman," spoke Margery, steadily, in a hard, cold voice ; " you abused me, deserted me, and I have neither respect nor love to give you, yet if you so will I suppose I *must* go with you. So be it then ; to-morrow I will go with you where you will ; to-night I claim as my own, and well you know that my word is sacred to me."

And full well he knew such to be the case, for had he not taken advantage of that as well as of every other noble quality of her nature?

"But you must go away now," she continued, in the same hard, cold voice; "you must leave me my few hours unmolested. I would have them free from your presence; they must be mine;" she spoke passionately now; "do you hear—mine, without interference from you; tomorrow you can do with me as you will."

Ellison Moore hesitated. One step forward did Gregory Somers take, glancing from one to another. Moore's native craft told him that it was for his best interest to comply in this instance, so with a murderous look he only said:

"To-morrow, then, at noon I will be here; see you that you are ready for me," and vanished up the road over which he had come, a serpent into this paradise.

A dead silence seemed to fall upon the farm and its inmates with his departure; but it was a silence too fraught with agony to be lightly broken, and Margery Moore went about her work in a half-dazed manner, hardly realizing that she was part and parcel of the world, and only conscious of a vast, hard pain that held her inexorably in its deadly grip.

Gregory, with the new consciousness of himself that had burst upon him so unexpectedly, dared not approach her, and wandered about in absolute wretchedness, burning to take her in his arms and pour into her heart the love and sympathy that filled his own, yet with sublime self-devotion restraining himself for her dear sake. So the hours ran swiftly by, one by one, drifting them on to the rocks ahead, on which their happiness was to be wrecked, each vividly conscious of this fact and yet cruelly bound hand and foot against self-help. The sun went down among lowering, angry clouds, the twilight deepened into night. Two lonely creatures kept solitary vigil in the old farm, each heart crying out for the other and wrung with

agony in the thought of what the morrow held, but separated by an insurmountable barrier, to which the partition between their rooms was but as thin mist. As though in accord with the tumult of their minds and hearts, the storm swept down upon them in all its fury, shrieking like a thousand fiends; lurid lightning darted hither and thither, and grand, rolling peals of thunder followed each other thick and fast.

At last its fury died away in distant mutterings and sobs, and the rain, like tears, dripped and fell in intermittent measures, when in the lull of the elements came a sound of voices and the heavy tramp of men through the darkness, then a knock at the door of the farmhouse.

Margery heard Gregory Somers open the door and a half-smothered ejaculation.

A dim foreshadowing of dread fell over her spirit, and, opening her door, she stood in the presence of a weight that hung heavily in the grasp of two stalwart men. A swinging hand and arm that had fallen loose from their grip; a blackened face—and then, as her horror-stricken gaze followed the ghastly procession, she felt rather than heard one of the men say, "We found him in the road, and it must have been that awful flash that killed him, for he was stone dead when we found him."

Gregory Somers stepped toward Margery, and, taking her by the hand, for even in this dread moment his loyal love for this woman laid its restraining hand upon his feelings, he led her away.

"Margery," he almost shook with the fierce joy that filled his being, and the awful effort to repress any outward sign—"Margery"—how low and tender was his voice—"come away, my dear; this is not fit for you to look upon now."

She looked at him white and breathless. "It is," she whispered, with dry, choking voice, "it is—"

"Yes; Ellison Moore"—he could not

bring himself to say "your husband"—"and he is dead!"

There was a sudden loosening of the grasp upon his arm, and Margery Moore sunk back the image of death in his arms.

A wild exultation seized him; he covered her insensible face with kisses; he

called upon her by all the tender names in Love's vocabulary, and then his senses returned and he left her as she opened her eyes on life again to adjust this new order of things for herself, to realize her freedom from bondage, and perhaps, by and by, to catch a gleam of a sunny future.

SPIDERS.

SPIDERS are best known by inference. Cobwebs, *ergo* spiders. But the insects themselves are not much in evidence. It is not their nature to come to the front; they are of a conspiring kind. Yet it is very curious, considering their extraordinary numbers, how comparatively seldom they are seen. A light brought suddenly into a dark room will sometimes betray one guiltily flat on the wall, with its legs all spread out round it in the very act of sudden surprisal. In cobwebbed cellars, too, there is at every turn the suspicion of long legs suddenly withdrawn into gray trunks, of shrinking away, and stealthy evanishment. But it is only the suspicion. During an autumn walk they may be seen in shrubberies or out in the country, basking complacently in the centre of their beautiful nets—comfortable dowager-spiders that a fly ought to be able to see a mile off. Or in summer, if you care to look, you will see that most awful of little creatures, the cat-spider, hunting for prey on the woodwork of your window or the sunniest patches of the wall where the flies like to settle.

Laugh if you like, but in all seriousness it is very exciting to watch this queer little tiger at work. It moves hardly faster than the minute hand of a watch. Indeed, it does not *seem* to move at all, but rather as if the fly it was stalking was a magnet drawing the spider toward it involuntarily. The eye can hardly note the

legs stir at all; and yet, as you watch, the interval between the tiny beast of prey and its victim steadily, perceptibly, decreases. And at last it is within leaping distance, and gets ready. But with what exasperating slowness! Will it *never* jump? And when it does, you do not see it. The act is too rapid for the eye to catch. But there all the same is the fly with the cat-spider on its back rolling over and over. And the eyesight of the small panther! The lynx is purblind by comparison. And as for its courage, the wild boar even does not excel it. Indeed, it is so brave as to be almost tame. If you threaten it with your finger, it turns fiercely on you, retreating backward, and very soon it loses all fear of you, and will go after any fly it sees in spite of you. What a study on animal life it is, this crouching atom, so small and yet so fatally deadly. The ledge of the window-pane is a trifle rough; see how the spider takes advantage of every little pimple or speck of cover! Or it is smooth; see how it slips over the edge and, knowing it is quite out of its victim's sight, makes short rushes, coming cautiously up to peer over the edge after each rush to see if the fly has changed its position! And then when it gets exactly under the fly, watch it come up on the level! Is the fly washing its face? The spider advances. Does the fly stop washing its face as if disquieted? The spider

stops too. And then the lightning spring, the rough and tumble, the fearful tenacity of its ferocious grasp. It is a wonderful bit of nature: straight from the jungles. And so educational; giving glimpses under the surface; a light on the real life-story of insects.

Moreover, this particular spider is curious among its kind in that it turns its head on its shoulders to look about it. If a bird flies past the window it turns like lightning. It will watch a person cross a room. Some of its eyes being on the very top of its head, it can see behind it. No terrier ever looked more knowing or cocked its head more cleverly. All the same, it gives the little creature a very uncannily intelligent look.

Who has not at one time or another thought the lives of insects enviably free from care? When out among the heather, or resting some summer's noon under a tree, how happy the small-winged folk, sunning themselves on the flower-heads, seem to be, without, apparently, any troubles or even responsibilities. They zigzag and flutter about as if time and place were nothing to them. This field or the next—what does it matter? Now, or by and by? But whenever I hear any one envy the life of flies, I think to myself, "My friend, you have forgotten *the spiders*." Sunshine and wings and flowers—a delightful combination, no doubt. But think of the spiders. It is worth while to do so, for it may turn over quite a new page in nature for you.

Imagine, for instance, that the insects which you see "dancing" in the air, out of pure light-heartedness, too happy even to sit still on a flower, or even to make their choice on which one they will settle, as you imagine, *are afraid to alight*. Fancy, if you can, that every blossom, every tempting twig, has a hungry spider upon it and that the flies know it and dare not rest. What, then, becomes of all their light-heartedness, of the glad-someness that keeps them so buoyantly

ever on the wing? From every resting-place, bright petal, or green leaf, cruel, patient eyes are looking out and up at the winged things, half-minded to settle and yet afraid. Fangs are working and mumbling together in the excitement of expectation, legs are drawn up all ready to spring—and the fly knows it. It hovers over the welcome perch, the tempting honey, but instinct tells it of a peril that is ambushed; its courage fails it, and, just as you think it is going to settle, it is gone. How "frivolous," "giddy," and all the rest of it, it seems, this fly in the summer's sunshine, dancing from flower to flower, does it not? But, my friend, are you sure that the fly did not see something? Look close yourself at the purple cushion of that scabious. Nothing? Look closer. Nothing still? Look underneath. Ah! Now, suppose yourself a fly, and that spider as large as yourself, and then conceive, if you can, the blood-curdling horror of such an apparition suddenly confronting you. If you had human wits about you before you met it, the odds are that you would be a gibbering idiot forever afterward. Human reason could not possibly stand the shock of such a fearful sight. Spiders the size of bullocks would kill at sight,

"Mock the majesty of man's high birth,
Despise his bulwarks, and unpeople earth."

No wonder, then, that the fly was reluctant to settle on the scabious, and that it "danced" about the flower so long, and eventually decided not to sit down. But the "giddiness" and "light-heartedness" has all gone out of the picture.

Of course, I do not assert that my idea is correct. It may be only a fancy. But it is, at any rate, perfectly safe to assume that, in a very large number of cases, the precipitancy of a fly's departure is due to a very proper discretion, and not to silliness. Also, that very often indeed when an insect seems unreasonable in its sudden changes of intention, it has, as a matter of fact, the best of all reasons for its conduct,

namely, escape from death. The purple cushion of the scabious, so warm with the sun shining full on it, and each of the little flowerets that compose the disc so full of fragrant honey, is the very ideal of a resting-place for a fly. And so, too, thinks the fly, till there grows up gradually over the edge of the flower two fine, green legs tipped with little claws. Then it is time to be off—there is none to waste. If the fly stands upon the order of its going, there will follow the legs a pair of grass-green nippers, exquisitely sharp at the points, toothed, too, on the inner side and hollowed like a cobra's fang to carry poison. And above the grass-green nippers will be two rows of eyes as bright as diamonds—and that is the last the fly will remember. So it wisely goes at once.

The knowledge of this prevalence of spiders goes some way to give a just appreciation of insect life. At any rate, without it, any idea of that life must be as ridiculously incomplete as if we were to think of mice in kitchens without cats and traps. This perpetual recurrence of spiders and their webs in every crook and cranny of the country makes insect existence anything but careless. It rather seems a constant ambuscade. Fortunately, the flies do not know it, or they would abandon life in despair; and fortunately, too, they have no nerves, or they would go mad with horrors and the apprehension of them.

There is always present in the quietest scenes in nature an underlying grimness which makes insect life very real and serious. The birds seem merely an awkward incident in fly-life; their prodigious havoc among the winged things only occasional and local as compared with the ubiquitous and universal spiders'. The former, no doubt, are active and voracious, and very numerous. But what is their activity, voracity, or their numbers by comparison with the myriads of these little, subtle, and nimble blood-suckers? They are everywhere—among the grass, in the herb-

age, the undergrowth, the shrubs, the trees, in the hedges and the ditches, on railings, tree-trunks, walls, and the ground; creeping, hiding, web-spinning, leaping, they cover the earth in a universal conspiracy. Science calls them by the names of beasts of prey, and it was well to do so. For if you will take a foot of ground out in the country any summer's day as your sphere of observation, and watch for awhile, you will see the cat-spider come creeping along, suddenly springing as it goes at everything that looks like a fly; the wolf-spider pass rapidly across with business-like directness; the lynx-spider sidle from blade to blade. Or spread a handkerchief under a bush, and strike the branches with a stick. Spiders come tumbling out, or hang in mid-air by the threads that, even against so sudden an alarm, they have all prepared.

"Her disemboweled web
Arachne * in a hall or kitchen spreads
Obvious to vagrant flies; the secret stands
Within her woven cell; the humming prey,
Regardless of their fate, rush on the toils
Inextricable; nor will aught avail—
Their arts, or arms, or shapes of lovely hue.
The wasp insidious, and the buzzing drone,
A butterfly, proud of expanded wings
Distinct with gold, entangled in her snares
Useless resistance make: with eager strides
She, towering, flies to her extended spoils."

This "triumphant" descent of the spider upon its victim is a very favorite fancy of the poets; and, though I have never myself recognized any such exultation in the demeanor of the little fly-catcher, I have often imagined that I detected a high-stepping affected way about it when, having done up its prey into a parcel, it minces off to its dining-room with its dinner dangling behind it. At any rate, there was abundant self-satisfaction, and not without cause either. For, taking nature all round, I know no episode that excels in interest the success-

* Spiders never seek the fly,
But leave him of himself to apply.—*Buller.*

ful web-spinning of spiders. Savages are laboriously ingenious in trap-setting, but "Arachne" gives them points at every stage. And how curious it is to see Nature admiring herself, so satisfied with the perfection of her own work, that she copies it in flowers:—

"Fair Cypripedia,* with successful guile,
Knits her smooth brow, extinguishes her smile—
A spider's bloated paunch and jointed arms
Hide her fair form, and mask her blushing
charms;
In ambush sly the mimic warrior lies,
And on quick wing the panting plunderer flies."

—Darwin.

Did the poets know that "gossamer" was spider's web? Many certainly did not; some are doubtful; some undoubtedly did. Thus, Darwin, accurately excellent, speaks of the adventurous flight of the newly hatched gossamer-spider:—

"So shoot the spider brood at breezy dawn
Their glittering net-work o'er th' autumnal
lawn;

From blade to blade connect with cordage fine
The unbending grass, and 'live along the line.'"

And again, in "Price Arthur," is the line—

"On the buoyant air sublimely borne."

*A flower from South America, part of which looks like a spider.

And again in Charlotte Smith:—

"Small, viewless aeronaut, that by the line
Of gossamer suspended, in mid-air
Float'st on a sunbeam. Living atom, where
Ends thy breeze-guided voyage? With what
design

In aether dost thou launch thy form minute,
Mocking the eye? Alas! before the veil
Of dense clouds shall hide thee, the pursuit
Of the keen swift may end thy fairy sail."

At the hands of poets the spider fares well at her wheel, but, as a rule, she is considered sinister and treacherous:—

"The subtle spider never spins
But on dark days her shiny gins;"

and her devices for securing food, so patiently worked out, so admirably efficient when complete, are looked upon as wicked frauds upon the confiding flies, snares for the innocently unwary. In metaphor they are, therefore, usurers, attorneys, murderers, and Jews. But, greatly as they mar one's pleasure in the country by constantly intruding upon pleasant scenes the evidences of strife and suffering, it is reasonable to have as kind a liking for spiders as for flies, and, as Scott says, feel as tenderly for spiders "as if I were a kinsman of King Robert of happy memory."

EBBING.

THOU that sittest in the shade
Of the sorrow thou hast known,
Yearning, yearning evermore,
Dropping tears and making moan;
Sittest with thine empty hands
Upward flung in wild unrest,
Heedless of the flowers fair
Which thy careless feet have pressed.
Summer-time has passed thee by,
Thine no more the fervid ray,
Sighs nor tears can bring to thee
One departed golden day.
Onward, outward flows the tide
As the sweet September wanes;
Heart, thou still hast much to lose,
Prize it while it yet remains.

S. J. JONES.



THE first fan probably fluttered in the little brown hands of some of those lithe, straight-nosed Nilotic women—queen-consorts of the Usartasens or the Amenhoteps, back in old Egypt, when the Pyramids were young. Examples of these Egyptian fans may be seen in plates of the sculptures at Thebes and other places. In the museum of Boulak, near Cairo, a wooden fan handle showing holes for feathers is still preserved. It is from the tomb of the Fourth Amenhotep, of the famous eighteenth dynasty, 1650 B.C. Many of the early fans were made from the wings of a bird joined laterally and fastened to a delicate handle, either of palm wood, ebony, or ivory. Some of the most beautiful were manufactured from ostrich feathers. The fan of the priest of Isis, according to Rawlinson, was semi-circular, made of feathers of different lengths, pointed at the top, and waved by a female slave.

In the early ages fans had other uses besides that of cooling the heated faces of languid beauties and stately princesses by agitating the air, being attributes of royalty along with horse-hair fly-flappers and umbrellas. They were valuable ac-

cessories to street processions, temple services, and all the courtly pageants of the Egyptian and Assyrian Kings. A bas-relief in the British Museum represents Sennacherib (the contemporary of King Hezekiah) offering sacrifice, with female figures carrying feather fans. In India fans were also attributes of persons in authority, and sometimes sacred emblems.

The fan figures largely in classic literature. The Roman poets, Ovid, Terrence, and Propertius, frequently allude to its use, and the pictures on the ancient vases also indicate the wide prevalence of the fashion. In Euripides' tragedy of "The Troades," a eunuch is introduced, who says that, in accordance with Phrygian custom, he had used his fan to protect Helen against the effect of the heat. Fans constituted part of the *mundus muliebus*, or bridal outfit of the ancient Roman ladies. During the time of the Empire they were very fashionable, being used at home and abroad, and even at dinner parties slaves with fans stood behind the guests. The Pompeian beauty Julia, is represented by Bulwer Lytton as using a costly fan of ivory and jeweled feathers, and there is an account in Seutonius of

the Empress Agrippina killing one of her slaves by a stroke of her ebony-handled fan.

In China fans have been in use from the earliest times of the Empire. According



to some authorities, the Celestials were the inventors of this elegant article of the toilet, its origin being ascribed to the Lady Kan-si, the daughter of a mandarin, back in the reign of Fohi, two thousand two hundred years B. C. The Chinese annalists relate another legend, how long, long ago, when the Emperor Hoang-

Ti reigned, his Empress, the beautiful Su-ling-shi, held a grand court festival one sultry summer day. The sun just blazed down from an unclouded sky; the air was so still that even when the Empress and her ladies wandered into the gardens, not a zephyr moved to refresh them by a cooling breeze. "If I only could make the air move!" sighed the despairing Princess, and she dismissed her attendants and took a bath in a secluded fountain.

As she lay reclining in indolent languor beneath the shade, a queer little old woman approached her, and bowing to the ground, placed in her hands the prettiest, tiniest little fan, all ivory and silk and gold and lacquer work, and said: "O gracious Queen! consort of the Son of Heaven, behold what will make the air cool when the sun burns the earth." She then retired as mysteriously as she came.

The heart of Su-ling-shi was filled with delight, and the next day she showed the miniature fan to a cunning artisan, and bade him make her a dozen such toys of large size, which he accordingly did. So the Empress Su-ling-shi suffered no more from the heat when the west winds were still, and ever since fans have been prized objects of comfort and elegance.

Folding fans had their origin in Japan,

and were imported thence to China. They were in the shape still used—a segment of a circle of paper pasted on a light, radiating framework of bamboo, and variously decorated, some in colors, others of white paper on which verses or sentences are written. It is considered a compliment in China to invite a friend or distinguished guest to write some sentiment on your fan as a memento of any special occasion, and this practice has continued for many centuries. Men and women of every rank both in China and Japan carry fans, even laborers using them with one hand while working with the other. In China they are often made of carved ivory, the sticks being plates very thin and sometimes carved on both sides, the intervals between the carved parts pierced with astonishing delicacy, and the plates held together by a ribbon. The Japanese make the two outer guards of the stick which cover the others occasionally of beaten iron, extremely thin and light, damascened with gold and other metals. Those which are chiefly imported to this country are of polished or japanned bamboo covered with paper, and vary in price from twenty to thirty cents per dozen.

Fans were used by the Portuguese court ladies in the fourteenth century, and were well known in England before the close of the reign of Richard II, 1377-99. In France the inventory of Charles V, in 1387, mentions a folding ivory fan. They were brought into general use in that country by Queen Catherine de Medici, probably from Italy, then in advance of other countries in all matters of personal luxury. The court ladies of Henry VIII were accustomed to handling fans. A lady in "The Dance of Death," by Holbien, holds a fan. Queen Elizabeth is painted with a round feather fan in her portrait at Gorhambury; and as



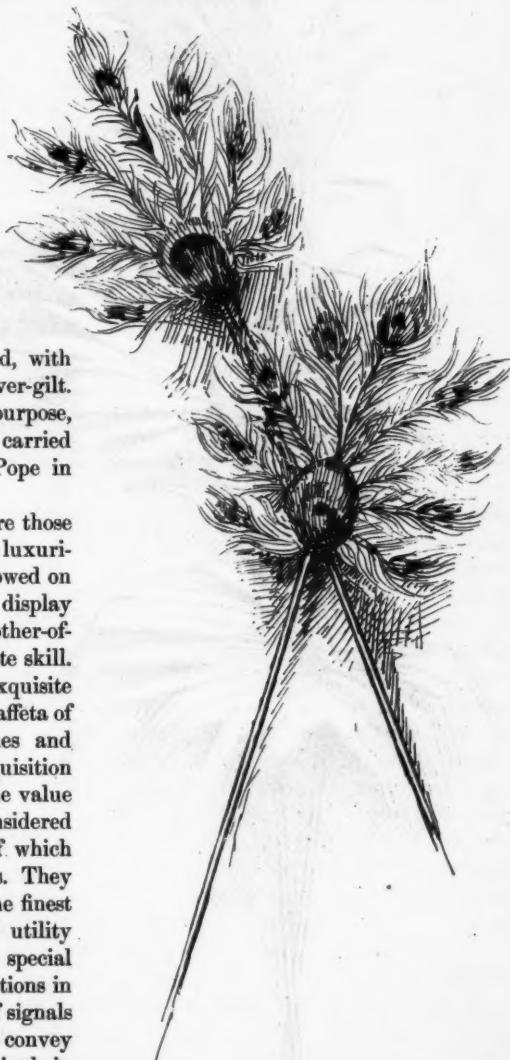
many as twenty-seven are enumerated in her inventory. In Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor," Jack Falstaff observes to Pistol in the inn: "When Mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took't upon mine honor thou hadst it not."

Most of these fans of the Middle Ages were made of eagle or peacock feathers, in various forms, fastened with a handle of gold, silver, or ivory.

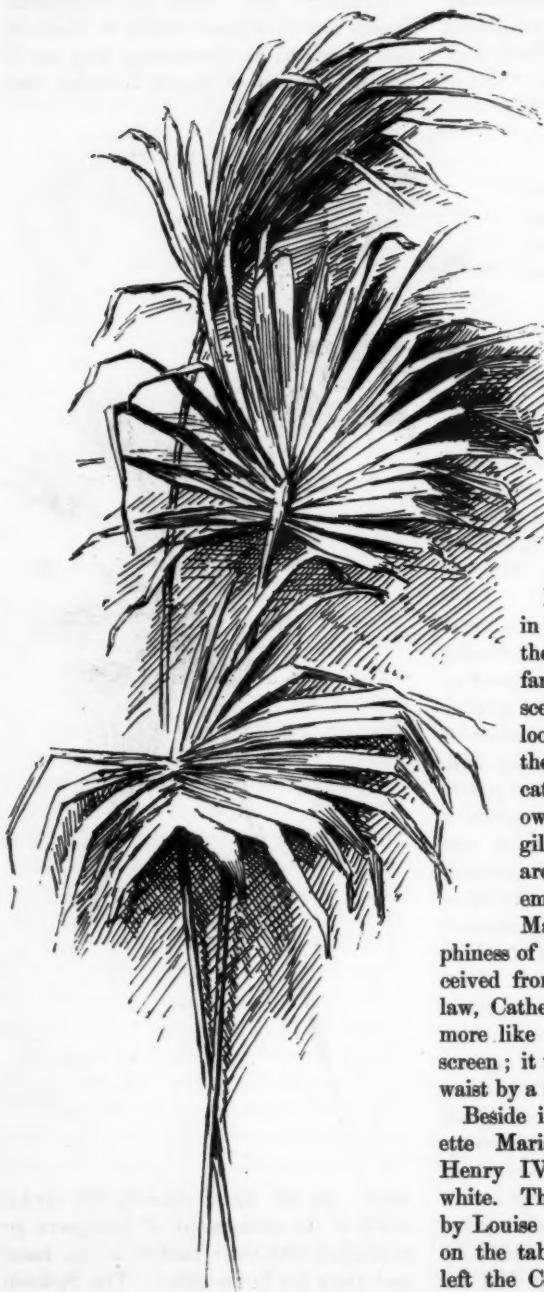
During the early Middle Ages there was a kind of fan used to keep flies and other insects from the sacred elements during the celebration of the Christian-Mysteries. Sometimes they were round, with bells attached of silver or silver-gilt. They are no longer used for that purpose, but the large feather fans are still carried in the State processions of the Pope in Rome.

The halcyon days of the fan were those of the eighteenth century. All the luxurios ornamentation of art was bestowed on these articles as far as they could display it. The sticks were made of mother-of-pearl, or ivory carved with exquisite skill. Picturesque landscapes, the most exquisite paper of China, the most elegant taffeta of Florence, mirrors, precious stones and pearls, all in turn were put in requisition to enhance the appearance and the value of the fan. No toilet was considered complete without a fan, the cost of which frequently exceeded seventy dollars. They were occasionally mounted with the finest point lace. Aside from their real utility and ornamental value they had special conventional uses, and various actions in handling them grew into a code of signals by which ladies were supposed to convey hints or tokens to admirers or to rivals in society. Our readers will perhaps recall, in connection with this, Addison's humorous paper in the *Spectator*, in which he proposed to establish a regular drill for these purposes.

Although fans must be considered largely objects of mere luxury in England and Paris and St. Petersburg, they are of actual necessity in Spain, America, and



Italy. In the latter country the cooks, much to the amusement of foreigners, go to market with their basket in one hand and their fan in the other. The Spanish ladies are said to be imitable in their



management of the fan, and their descendants in the New World, the Mexicans and the Peruvians, are scarcely less celebrated. Fans are still the great feminine extravagance of modern times, after the handkerchief. The highest prices are probably paid in Paris Chinese and Japanese fans are very fashionable, but the most precious are those made some hundred of years ago and painted in miniature, or inlaid with precious stones. We recently saw an item to the effect that five thousand francs had been paid for one that once belonged to Queen Elizabeth.

In the Museum of Antiquities in the Louvre, under a glass case, the visitor can see some historic fans that have been through their scenes of gayety, and which still look as rich and elegant as when they fluttered in the fair and delicate hands of their long-dead owners. There is the fan—all gilt and ivory, with white feathers around it, and two crowns heavily embroidered in the centre—which Mary Stuart, the young Dauphiness of France, a bride of sixteen, received from the hands of her mother-in-law, Catherine de Medici. This fan is more like what we should call a hand-screen; it was worn suspended from the waist by a ribbon.

Beside it lies the fan of Queen Henriette Maria, of England, daughter of Henry IV—a widow's fan, black and white. There, too, is the fan once owned by Louise de la Vallière, which she left on the table of her apartment when she left the Convent of the Carmelites. It has the two "L's"—Louis and Louise—

intwined in the centre, and was a present from Louis XIV. There glitters the showy fan of the brilliant Montespan, who won the heart of Louis from Louise de la Vallière, and in close conjunction is the large gray fan behind which the demure prude, Madame de Maintenon, hid the yawns of *ennui* excited by the most unusable of monarchs. But the fan of all others is one set with diamonds, that has been borne many a time through the gilded *salons* of Versailles and the Tuilleries, while the eyes of the noble and the brave of France were fixed with admiration upon the fair hand which waved it so gracefully. And to think that those hands so white and fair, born to hold a sceptre and to rule a court, were tied with ignoble ropes, and the proud, beautiful

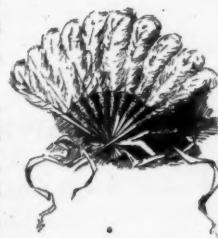
head that hid behind it at those royal pomps of Versailles, had bowed beneath a felon's hands and rolled into a basket amid the hoots of a mob!

Poor Marie Antoinette! If that fan could speak, what would it not tell of heart-aches, as well as heart-throbs, of the unfortunate Princess, whose only fault was an unbending pride and whose greatest crime was in being a Queen!

And now, in closing, we can only say, as Citizen II observes in Racine's *Berenice*:

"What! is all this about only so small a thing as a fan (*evontail*)?"

H. MARIA GEORGE.



THREE YOUNG WIVES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

CHAPTER I.

ONLY a year; and already, amid the sweet, though faint and far-away echo of the marriage-bells, notes of discord were beginning to break in.

Only a year; and the tender blue of the sky which had been so soft and luminous was losing its exquisite tone and beginning to fade off into leaden dullness.

Only a year; and the promise had been so fair!

Three young brides! Can you ever forget their girlish beauty as you saw them at the chancel? Or the solemn impressiveness of the beautiful service? The years go by, and memory holds that scene in all its loveliness, but lifts it more and more into an ideal region, as if it were only the record of a dream or the creation of a poet's fancy.

They had walked lovingly together, these three women, along the pleasant ways of girlhood, and when it happened that each fair maiden found herself on the threshold of marriage, a single wedding-day and a common ceremonial had been chosen; so it was that three brides stood together at the altar.

It was a memorable occasion in Westbrook, in which the marriage took place. The church was crowded to overflowing. Such a thing as a triple wedding might well excite the town. The three handsome girls who had chosen to make a little sensation on the event of their departure for the happy land of matrimony were general favorites, and this lent a higher interest to the occasion.

The promise was very fair. Even nature seemed to smile a benediction, for the heavens were clear. To many lips came the old saying, as the propitious sky

was regarded: "Happy is the bride that the sun shines on."

Only a year, as we have said, and already, amid the still sweet, though faint and far-away echoes of the marriage bells, notes of discord were beginning to break in.

We enter a pretty little home. It is pervaded by an air of order and comfort. A few well-chosen pictures hang on the walls; books are lying about; there is a piano and music, a portfolio of engravings and photographs, and two or three small but well-chosen bronzes. Everything indicates a degree of taste and cultivation.

A fair young woman, with clear, blue eyes and a soft, girlish face, which is beautiful in spite of some irregularities of feature, has just laid her hand on the arm of her handsome young husband, and is saying, in an almost pleading voice:

"O Carl, dear! you're not going out this evening? It's so lonesome when you're away." She draws both hands through his arm, and holds him tightly, as trying to add force to her words. But he moves away, replying almost coldly:

"I must go out, Helen. I have an engagement. Send Bridget round for Millie Sanderson. She'll come and keep you company until I get back. It won't be very long."

The young wife makes no response to this suggestion, but the light goes out of her face as she unclasps her hands and withdraws them from the arm of her husband. There is no warmth left by the kisses which he has laid upon her lips, as she stands a few moments later all alone, with the tears blinding her eyes. The jar of the closing door as Carl Raynor goes

out strikes like a blow upon the heart of his wife.

On leaving his home the young man walks rapidly away; but he has not gone far before he begins to move with a slower pace and to drop his head with a thoughtful air. The blindness which came with the ripple of annoyance that followed his wife's opposition to his going out is passing off, and his inner vision is becoming clearer, and with this clearer seeing a better feeling is restored. Slower and slower his steps are taken, and now he stops and stands with a hesitating air.

"Carl!" A familiar blow on the young man's shoulder accompanies the greeting.

"Bob!" In a quick and pleased response.

A hand is drawn through Raynor's arm, and the two young men move quickly onward.

"Is Millie alone?" asks Raynor.

"Yes," with just a shade of feeling in the answering voice.

"Rose hates so to be left all by herself in the evening. I told her to send round for Millie."

"I'm glad of it. Millie's getting low-spirited about something. She'd have me tied to her apron-strings all the while if I'd let her."

"Like all the rest of them"—a light, almost unfeeling tone in Carl Raynor's voice.

"It's just so with Florry Whitcomb. Lew and I were talking about it only yesterday. He and Florry had a little tiff about his going out so much in the evening. It's worrying Lew, for he's fond of his little wife, and any cloud that falls on her is pretty sure to darken his sunshine."

"Botheration on the women!" ejaculates Carl, half in lightness of speech and half in earnest. "If a fellow doesn't make a clean breast of everything he does or says from the time he leaves home until he gets back again, he must look out for cloudy weather."

His friend, Robert Sanderson, does not reply. For a little while the two young men walk on in silence.

"See here, Carl!" Sanderson stops and faces about. "I'm going back home."

"Pshaw! you're joking."

"No; I'm in earnest."

"What are you going home for?"

"The fact is, Carl"—the young man speaks quite seriously—"I can't get out of my mind the look I saw on Millie's face as I left her a little while ago. It haunts me."

"Put on for the occasion. I know. It's April rain one moment and April sunshine the next. Doesn't amount to anything. If you could see Millie's face at this moment you wouldn't find the look that is haunting you, as you say."

"Millie isn't a dissembler," Sanderson replies, with some evidence of displeasure in his voice.

"Oh! I didn't mean that," is the ready response. "But they're all mere creatures of feeling, you know; and the dominant feeling always carries them away. You can't count on a woman for twenty-four hours at a time."

"I can count on Millie," returns Sanderson, with positiveness.

"And the apron-strings," retorts Raynor, a slight sting of sarcasm in his voice.

"Yes, apron-strings and all, if you will."

"Just in the nick of time!" exclaims another voice, as the two young men are joined by a third. What's the parley?"

"Bob says that he's going back home," answers Carl Raynor.

"Going home! Isn't sick, I hope?"

"Sick in sentiment; that's all. Cloudy weather at Ivy Cottage. Millie is getting lonesome; and"—after a pause—"so is my Rosy posy; bless her heart! But we can't always be tied at home and to apron-strings. A man who works all day must have a little recreation in the evening, now and then, and the chance to go where he pleases."

"Our 'now and then' is getting to be nearly every night, remarked Sanderson.

"A knowledge of the disease is said to be half the cure," answers Lewis Whitcomb, the last comer. "I'm of Bob's way of thinking. We're running it into the ground. Four nights in six is going it rather strong; and it's time we held up a little."

"Had a curtain lecture?" says Raynor, in a tone of banter.

"If each of us had one now and then, it wouldn't hurt us, nor be more than we deserve," is laughingly replied. "But I'm not joking. It isn't fair to be away from home so much in the evening, and I, for one, mean to turn over a new leaf."

"Let it be after to-night, then," returns Carl Raynor. And to this it was agreed.

A little while afterward we find them in a billiard saloon, cue in hand, and forgetful of their lonely young wives at home, in their interest in the game upon which they have entered.

There was an overflow of the tears which Raynor had seen gathering in the eyes of his wife as soon as she was left alone. She did not act on his suggestion to send for Millie Sanderson. Her heart was too heavy for any companionship except that of her husband, whose presence alone could lift the weight that was bearing her down. The dread of something evil had fallen like a shadow upon the brightness of her life. Carl was changing; but in what she could not really tell. It was not his absence from home evening after evening, and the loneliness she felt when he was away, that troubled her most. A vague fear of something beyond haunted her mind continually, and grew stronger with each new evidence of the change to which we have referred.

A half hour passed, and she had scarcely stirred in her chair since Carl left her. The tears which had fallen freely at first were dry on her cheeks; but the dull ache went on in her heart. At the end of this time she was aroused by a

familiar voice at the door, and a moment afterward her friend Millie Sanderson came in. With a strong effort she rallied herself. A smile broke over her face, and light came into her eyes, which had been dull and dreary.

Then followed pleasant words of greeting and loving kisses and twining arms; and then a slow fading out of each fair young countenance of the light which had flushed it with a wan and tender beauty. Each had a secret trouble and a dull aching at the heart; and each a vague unrest and fear which no effort at self-repression could wholly conceal.

They were silent for a little while as they sat down, side by side. Millie Sanderson was first to speak.

"I felt so lonesome, dear," she said, trying to keep her voice steady, "that I couldn't stay by myself a minute longer. Robert went out after tea. Jane came round with me, and I'll get your Bridget to see me home. Is Carl out for the evening?"

"Yes; he had an engagement with somebody."

A silence of several minutes, and then, Millie speaking: "Did he say with whom?"

"He did not," Rose answered.

They were silent again.

"He was with Robert and Lew Whitcomb night before last."

Rose gave a little start, and glanced up quickly into the face of her friend.

"Are you certain?" Both voice and look betrayed something more than surprise.

"Yes, Robert told me."

"Where were they?"

"At the Grant House playing billiards for a part of the evening."

"Robert said so?"

"Yes."

Millie saw something in the face of her friend that gave her a feeling of pain.

"I wish Carl wouldn't go with Lew Whitcomb so much."

"Why?" Millie asked, with a little startled look in her eyes.

"I've nothing against him personally. He's good-hearted, and as kind to Florry as he can be. But—" Rose held back what was on her lips.

"But what, dear? Why don't you like Carl to go with him so much?"

"To tell the truth, Millie, I'm afraid Lew is getting rather wild. That he likes pleasure more than work; and—
and—"

"What else, dear?" The questioner seemed to hold her breath for the reply.

"That he is drinking too much," answered Rose.

"Oh! no, no, not that!" was the prompt response.

"I wish that I could get it out of my mind, but I cannot. Poor Florry! If it should be so! I'm certain that he drank more wine at Mr. Harding's last week than I'd like to see pass my husband's lips."

"He was gayer than usual, I remember; and so were other young men, and some of the girls too, for that matter. Lew Whitcomb has a ready flow of spirits."

"I saw Florry look at him in a strange, uneasy kind of way a number of times," said Rose. "Do you think her as bright and cheerful as she was?"

"Perhaps not, now that you call my attention to the matter. I never thought of it before. And I remember that the last time Robert and I spent an evening with them they did not offer us refreshments."

"Is that so?"

"Yea."

"Did Robert make any remark about it after you came away?"

"No; but he spoke of having spent a dull evening. I think something must have gone wrong between Lew and Florence. They seemed dreadfully out of spirits."

"Do you like this way of having wine or ale whenever friends come in to spend an evening?" asked Rose.

"No; I do not like it at all," replied Millie. "I didn't think much about it at first; but it's beginning to worry me. Not that I'm afraid of Robert; but so many young men are carried away that it doesn't seem right to put temptation before any one. Look at Harry Oldham. There wasn't a more promising young man in town three or four years ago; and what is he now? It makes my heart ache whenever I see his wife. I'd rather be dead than in her place."

"I've talked about it once or twice to Carl, but he laughs at me."

While Rose was speaking the door opened, and a girlish figure, almost petite in form and stature, entered the room.

"Why, Florry, dear!" fell from the lips of Mrs. Raymond in a tone of pleased surprise, "I'm so glad to see you! Here's Millie. Is Lewis with you?"

"No, I came over by myself. Lew went out more than half an hour ago, and I grew so lonesome that I couldn't bear it any longer."

Tremor in the speaker's voice, which could not be repressed, betrayed a troubled state of feelings. She tried to rally herself, but failed. A brief struggle, and then, laying her face on the bosom of Rose, she wept for awhile silently.

"You mustn't mind me, I'm a foolish child," she said, as she lifted her face and tried to smile. "It isn't anything. But I get to thinking and thinking when I'm all alone, and a hundred silly notions come into my head."

"It's too bad!" exclaimed Rose, with a throb of indignation in her voice. "I wonder how they'd like it if we were away from home two evenings in three?"

"And without so much as saying: By your leave, sirs," broke in Millie, in a tone that echoed the rebellious feeling manifested by Rose.

"There's just this about it," said Rose, with the manner of one to whom a new thought had been suggested, "sitting down and crying is not going to help us."

"What will help us?" asked Millie.

"That's to be found out, and it's our business to find it out."

Rose was bright, and had more independence and decision of character than either of her young friends. If she resolved to do a thing, it was hard to turn her from her purpose, and it generally happened that her steady will found its way into effective action. Up to this time she had been drifting with the currents that were bearing her she scarcely knew whither, but away, she feared, from the haven of peace and happiness for which the sails were set on her wedding-day. All at once there had stirred in her heart a new purpose, and thought was beginning to shape some dim outlines of a way by which to reach its attainment.

"Our business to find it out." Even as the sentence passed her lips did this process of thinking begin. Her two friends waited for what more she might have to say. It was some moments before the shadowy forms in her busy little head began to assume a definite shape. Love, not a sense of wrong or a feeling of neglect, was helping to determine its character. The first motions of indignation which the tears of Florence Whitcomb had awakened were already nearly obliterated by the quickly following wave of concern for her husband which came sweeping across her mind. There was a new impression of danger, a feeling as though a concealed enemy were following close upon his footsteps, waiting for an opportunity to strike him a fatal blow. When she spoke again it was in a more subdued voice and with a quieter and more reflective air.

"It may be," she said, "that all the blame does not lie with our husbands."

A look of surprise came into the fair young faces of her companions at this suggestion.

"Before we were married," Rose went on, "no company was so pleasant as ours.

What has changed all this in so short a time? Why are they so ready to leave us in the evening after work and business are over, and to seek for pleasures outside of their homes and in other companionship than that of their wives?"

Wet eyes gazed into the speaker's sober face, and only blank and troubled looks responded to her question.

"Something has gone wrong with them or with us, and the quicker we find out where the trouble lies, the better for us all," she continued.

"I'm sure I don't know," Florence said, in a choking voice; "I've done all I could to keep Lewis at home. But he gets restless almost as soon as tea is over; I'm not company for him any more." And tears began to flow over the dear little face.

"Why, bless my heart! What's all this about?"

They had not heard the bell ring, nor the opening of the outer door.

"Oh! it's Mrs. Wilder!" The three friends were on their feet in a moment, and gathering in a fond, familiar way about an old lady, whose calm face and soft gray eyes told of the gentle heart and tranquil spirit which but half revealed themselves.

"Crying! I declare! All three of you! Well, well! What has happened? Lost your canary birds? or is it a case of triple desertion? Three happy brides a year ago, and now three miserable young wives! Dear, dear!"

Under the lightness of tone in which Mrs. Wilder spoke lay a feeling of concern that was not entirely hidden.

"You've said the very words, Mrs. Wilder—three miserable young wives! That's what we are."

Rose tried to laugh as she made this response; but the attempt was feeble—the shadows on her face showing deeper for the light which had touched them and faded off.

"And pray, my little dears, what is it

all about? Have you quarreled with your husbands?"

"Oh! no! No! No!" came in a quick chorus.

"Well, then, what is it? If you are miserable wives, your husbands must in some way be concerned in your wretchedness. Where are they this evening?"

To this question there was no answer. Mrs. Wilder looked at them closely. A little light was coming into her mind.

"It is a case of desertion, then, after all," she said, with more gravity than lightness in her voice; "and you have met to condole with and comfort each other."

"You needn't make sport of us, Mrs. Wilder," broke in Millie Sanderson. "Do you think it right for our husbands to leave us all alone for three or four evenings in every week?"

"That will depend entirely on the cause of their absence," returned Mrs. Wilder. "What reason do they give for being away?"

"Oh! they've got engagements or want to see somebody about something or other —any excuse to get away." Millie spoke in a fretful voice.

"Any excuse to get away! Why, Millie! is that the case with Robert?"

"You'd think so if you saw how restless he becomes as soon as tea is over."

"To get away from his pretty little wife! Why, Millie, dear!"

"It's no fault of mine, Mrs. Wilder"—tears flooding Millie's eyes again and the blood crimsoning her face. "I do all I can and say all I can to keep him from going out. But it only worries him, and doesn't do any good. I'm distressed about it. If I knew just where he went and what he was doing; but—but—" Millie was not able to finish the sentence for the choking in her voice.

"And it's just so with Carl," said Rose. "He's losing interest in his home."

"And you don't know where he goes in the evening?"

"I know that he goes to the Grant House pretty often to play billiards. He must have some recreation, he says, after working hard all day. I don't mind the billiards, and wouldn't care so much if that were all. But you are aware, Mrs. Wilder, that something else is pretty sure to go with billiards."

"Yes, yes. The bar-room and the billiard-table are too close together. If men would play without drinking, no harm would come. It is the drinking which mars so much that is innocent in itself."

"And it is the drinking of which I am most afraid," said Rose. "There, Mrs. Wilder, you have the bitter drop in my cup. It isn't so much Carl's going out in the evening that troubles me, as my dread of what may come of it. If he returned home without the smell of beer or spirits on his breath, the kiss with which he meets me would be sweeter on my lips."

There was a failing and quivering in the voice of Rose as she closed the last sentence. Mrs. Wilder looked from face to face, and saw in each a reflection of the trouble to which Mrs. Raynor had given utterance.

"I see it all, my dears. It's the old story again repeating itself; the old shadow which has fallen upon so many hearts and darkened so many homes. I do not wonder that you feel troubled." Mrs. Wilder spoke with a growing seriousness in her manner.

All the color faded out of the girlish faces of the three young wives as they drew closer about the speaker.

"The bar-room and tavern are enemies to domestic peace," she continued, "and unless you can keep your husbands away from them the danger of losing all that makes home the happiest place in the world is very great."

White cheeks and scared eyes! Was it not cruel in Mrs. Wilder? How could she say it? As if it were their fault!

"In the face of danger, it is weakness and folly to sit with folded hands. Does the seaman gaze idly at the coming storm? or does he spring to the work of protecting himself when it breaks? How many vessels do you think would bring into port their rich cargoes if the sailors were not alert and swift to see and meet approaching danger?"

"O Mrs. Wilder! You frighten us! What can we do?" It was Rose who said this.

"You must do something to make home pleasanter than the Grant House to your husbands. Unless you can do this I see no remedy."

Mrs. Wilder saw a flash in Rose Raynor's eyes, and at the same time a hard compression of her lips.

"We everything, and they nothing!" And the little head drew itself back.

"Love makes no nice distinctions; does not give out measure for measure; is not chary of service," answered Mrs. Wilder. "Forget yourselves, if possible, and think only of your husbands and the dangerous ways in which they are almost unconsciously going. Then there will be some hope of clear-seeing; and clear-seeing almost always leads to right action. Don't cry over your trouble, but do your best to find a remedy."

"If I only knew what to do!" sighed Millie Sanderson.

"I've talked to Lewis; but it doesn't do any good," came sadly from Florry Whitcomb's lips.

"And Carl gets cross if I say a word." Rose spoke in an injured and slightly indignant tone.

"We'll let all that go," said Mrs. Wilder. "And now, girls," speaking in a cheery voice, "suppose we put our heads together and see what comes of it? If three bright little women, and one old grandmother to help, can't find out a way to manage these truant husbands, they're not as smart as I think them."

There was a contagion in the dear old

lady's voice and manner, an inspiring power in her speech, and soon the old head and the young heads were busy at work.

CHAPTER II.

"ELEVEN o'clock, as I live!" exclaimed Carl Raynor, who had drawn out his watch. He laid aside his cue as he spoke.

"We'll finish our game first," said his friend Sanderson.

"No; I'm going home. Didn't dream that it was so late," and Carl moved away from the billiard-table.

"All right," broke in Lewis Whitcomb. "Let's have a drink first."

"No more drinks for me," replied Raynor. "We've all had enough for one evening."

"Pshaw! come along," and Whitcomb turned toward the bar.

"Hold on, Carl!" and Sanderson grasped Raynor's arm. "Don't be unsocial." There was a slight resistance, but a few moments afterward the three young friends stood at the bar.

"This will never do," said Carl, as they passed from the Grant House to the street. "I promised Rose that I would be gone for only a little while, and here it is past eleven!"

There was a quickening of their steps by the young men, none of whom felt in a very comfortable state of mind; for thought was going homeward faster than their feet, and images of sad-looking, tearful wives were beginning to take shape in their fancies. In a little while they parted, each going the way that led to his own home.

Carl Raynor stood, a few minutes afterward, at the door of his pleasant cottage. A light was burning in the chamber above, and as he looked up at the windows he saw on the white muslin curtains the shadow of a moving figure, which he knew to be that of his wife. Now it came close to the window, showing a clear out-

line, and now receded, fading into something indefinite. As if a spell had been thrown over him, the young man stood gazing up at the shadow, which every few moments threw its clear impression on the white curtains and then went slowly dying off into indistinctness. Once the curtains were drawn apart and a face laid close to the window, where it remained for a considerable time; then it was hidden by the drapery, and Carl knew, as the shadow went quickly out of sight, that Rose had thrown herself into a chair, or across the bed, borne down by a sense of loneliness and fear. How his heart smote him! What a flood of pity and tenderness swept into his feelings. In a moment his key was in the latch. The door was pushed open, and his feet went hurrying up the stairs.

Did he meet a pale, sad, tearful little wife as he entered the chamber on whose curtained windows he had read of weary watching, of loneliness and heart-ache? Not so. The face that turned itself toward him was calm, and the eyes that looked into his grave, but tender. A faint smile lay on the lips that kissed him. The arm that drew itself gently around his neck betrayed not the slightest tremor. Carl was not prepared for this. What did it mean? Where were the reproachful eyes he had so often encountered? the unhappy face, and the complaining words which he had met with moody silence or a half impatient response that pushed away from him the dear, young wife he loved?

"I'm real sorry about it, Rose, dear." He spoke with a feeling of genuine regret. "I meant to have been home right early; but—but—the fact is, I got so interested in billiards that I forgot how the time was passing."

Carl, who was looking down gravely, but fondly, into Rose's face, saw a quick shadow fall over it.

"Did you send for Millie Sanderson?" he asked.

"No; but she came round and spent the evening."

"I'm glad of it. I should feel dreadfully if I knew that you had been all alone."

"Was Lewis Whitcomb with you?" asked Rose. Her voice betrayed to Carl something more than a desire to know who had been his companions during the evening.

"Yes. Why do you ask?" Raynor looked at his wife intently.

"You were at the Grant House?"

"Yes."

A pause, with something hesitating in the manner of Mrs. Raynor.

"I feel anxious about Lewis Whitcomb."

"Why so?" in a tone that betrayed a slight annoyance.

"You know, of course, a great deal more about him than it is possible for me to know; but it's my impression that he's getting too fond of drink."

Carl's brow fell; but it cleared in a few moments.

"I don't know but you're right," he returned, speaking thoughtfully.

"I notice that he always gets lively after drinking. He was *too* lively at Mrs. Harding's last week."

Carl did not reply. The gravity of his countenance returned.

"I can see that Florry is troubled about something. Oh! wouldn't it be a dreadful thing if her husband should become a—a—drunkard?"

"Pshaw! Nonsense! Impossible! He's no more in danger than I am."

Carl saw the large brown eyes that were resting upon him widen; something came into them that impressed him strangely. He could not read its significance.

"But few of his friends thought Harry Oldham in danger a year ago; all are in trouble about him now."

"Oh! he'll come out all right; no fear for Oldham."

"Do you really think there is nothing

to fear for him, Carl?" Rose laid her hand on her husband's arm and looked at him so steadily that his eyes fell under her gaze.

"There's always danger, you know, when a man gets a little too fond of his glass," Carl returned, speaking somewhat lightly. "No one knows whether his head will be strong enough to hold him or not."

"Does any man know this for himself?"

"Why, what in the world has come over my little Rosy! Have you and Millie been holding a temperance convention?"

Carl tried to make light of the subject; but it was of no use. Rose couldn't be moved from the quiet seriousness with which she was regarding it.

"If," she said, "Lewis Whitcomb be really drifting away upon dangerous currents, is it not the duty of every friend he has to hold him back, if possible?"

"No one will question that."

"I'm going to bring it right home, Carl." Rose spoke with growing decision. "That he is so drifting, you know, and I know, and all his nearest friends know. If he be not drawn back into safe waters, his ruin is only a question of time. What shall we do?—you and I, Carl? We are his friends. Shall we make every possible effort to save him? or push him farther out upon the treacherous stream, that his destruction may be sure?"

"What does all this mean, Rose? What on earth are you driving at?" There was some heat in Carl's manner.

"I am not speaking in parables," Rose answered, a faint smile flitting about her mouth. "Lewis Whitcomb is growing fond of drink; and drink, if indulged in too freely, is almost sure to destroy a man. Am I not right in this?"

"Perhaps so," was the constrained reply.

"Then, going back to what I said just now, shall we make every possible effort

to save him? or encourage him to drink on, and feed an appetite which, if indulged much farther, will gain a fatal power over him?"

A long silence followed, Rose waiting for her husband's response. Carl had dropped his eyes to the floor. His lips were pressed firmly together, and sharp lines were cutting themselves in his forehead.

"I don't know. Perhaps you are right." A sigh came with the words. "It never occurred to me before that I had any responsibility in the matter."

"It's an awful thing, Carl, to become a drunkard!" The tone and emphasis of his wife sent a disturbing thrill along the young man's nerves. "Is not the way in which Lewis is going the way that leads to drunkenness? and are not his feet gaining in swiftness every day?"

"Why, bless me, Rosy! What's the matter? Who's been here? And what have you been talking about? Somebody's been putting mischief in your head."

"It may be," was the smiling answer, "that a little of the same kind of mischief wouldn't do any serious harm if it got into your head."

Carl kissed the soft lips of his young wife—ah! if his breath had been as sweet as hers—and answered:

"I'll think it all over, dear. And now let us talk about something else. The theme isn't a pleasant one."

When Lewis Whitcomb turned into the street which gave him a view of Ivy Cottage no welcoming light greeted him from any of its windows. This had never happened before. Whether his return were early or late, always a lamp had burned for him. What meant the utter darkness now? He quickened his steps, almost running until he reached the door of his cottage, which stood a short distance back from the street in a pretty garden. The click of the latch, as the gate swung to, cut the still air sharply and jarred

along his nerves. All was dark and still in the chamber, to which he passed up with hasty strides. He struck a light, and turned to the bed where he expected to find his wife sleeping. It was empty. Calling the servant, he learned that Mrs. Whitcomb had gone out soon after tea and had not yet returned.

"Where did she go?" he demanded, with a look and an emphasis which caused the servant to move back a step or two.

"I'm sure I don't know, sir. She didn't say a word to me when she went out," the girl replied.

"Did any one call for her?"

"Not as I saw, sir. I'm sure she went out alone."

"Very well, that will do." And the servant retired. The color was fading out of the young man's face. For a short time he stood with a bewildered, irresolute air; then went slowly down to the front door and into the little porch, where he remained for a few moments, trying to think out the meaning of his wife's absence, but with no satisfactory result. Along the walk to the gate, and out upon the street; and now, which way should he turn, and where go in search of the absent one? While yet hesitating, he saw the figures of a man and a woman pass into the circle of light made by a street lamp two squares distant, and then into the shadows which lay in dark obscurity beyond. They were not long enough in the light for him to recognize either, but he felt sure that one of them was his wife, and he started forward in the direction from which they were coming. They met in the blaze of a lamp, which stood at an intermediate crossing, and Whitcomb saw what made him sick at heart. It was not the pale, shame-stricken, distressed face of his own wife into which he looked, but into that of the wife of his friend, Harry Oldham, to whom she was clinging, and whose uncertain steps she was endeavoring to guide. They had been spending an evening with

some friends, where the bottle had been passed too freely, and here was the unhappy result.

For an instant Lewis Whitcomb stood facing them, and then, without a word, passed on, leaving the wretched wife to get her husband home as best she could. He was too much shocked by the encounter, and too much troubled about his wife, to feel like pausing to address them. If Mrs. Oldham knew him, she did not give a sign of recognition.

All at once a chilliness crept into the air and the night seemed to grow darker. Whitcomb shivered as he drew his coat over his breast. Suddenly his steps were stayed and his head thrown forward in a listening attitude. A frightened cry had reached his ears—the cry of a woman. Then there came the sound of running feet, as of one trying to escape and another in pursuit. Springing forward in the direction from which these sounds proceeded, he soon saw a woman's flying form and that of a man following swiftly and lessening the distance between them at every step.

"Lewis! Lewis! O Lewis!" and the frightened fugitive, with a cry of recognition, threw herself into her husband's arms just as the hand of her pursuer was stretched out to grasp her. An instant later, and the man lay stunned on the pavement by a blow that almost took the life out of him. As he fell, his face was turned to the light, and Whitcomb saw the well-known features of a dissipated young lawyer, who had spent the greater part of the evening in the bar-room and billiard saloon of the Grant House. In his passion and indignation he kicked the prostrate form as he would have kicked that of a vicious dog, and then, drawing his arm about his trembling wife, made his way home as fast as her failing strength would permit.

Heavily and more heavily at every step did Mrs. Whitcomb lean upon her husband, and when they passed through

the gate and it had shut behind them, her weak limbs refused to bear her up any longer, and she would have fallen to the ground if her husband had not caught her in his arms. When he laid her upon her bed her face was like ashes, her eyes wild and full of fear, and every nerve ajar. To his eager questions she gave no satisfactory answers, and when he pressed to know where she had been and why she was away at so late an hour, she only said, in a feeble, half-wandering way:

"Oh! don't, don't! I can't think. Just let me lie and rest"—her eyes closing heavily and her body shrinking down into the bed on which she was lying, as if from a half-blind instinct of escape and safety.

CHAPTER III.

TIME had passed as swiftly with the three young wives as with their husbands, and it was long after ten o'clock when their conference ended and Millie Sanderson and Florence Whitcomb started for their homes, Mrs. Wilder accompanying them. Millie lived only a short distance from her friend Rose, but the home of Florence stood at a considerable distance away on the opposite side of the town.

After seeing Millie home, Mrs. Wilder and Florence walked on rapidly until they came to a street where their ways parted.

"It's so late and so dark, dear, that I can't let you go alone," said Mrs. Wilder; "I'll just see you home and then run back. It will only take a few minutes."

"Oh! no, no!" Florence replied. "You shall not go a step. I'm not in the least afraid."

Though, even as she spoke, a sense of fear began creeping into her heart. It fell upon her like a dark shadow the moment she found herself alone, and the street down which she must pass lying before her dark and gloomy. To move forward swiftly was her first impulse, but she had gone only a little way when she

saw a man who was coming down on the opposite side of the street stop and make a movement as if to come over and meet her. An instinct of danger caused her to quicken her steps. The man stood for a few moments, and then kept on his way. Mrs. Whitcomb saw this as she glanced back fearfully; but her startled nerves were trembling and her heart throbbed violently. She had nearly gained the street down which she had only a short distance to go to her home, when loud voices fell upon her ears and presently two men came in sight. They were gesticulating violently and uttering threats and curses.

Turning swiftly, Florence fled along the way she had come, like some startled animal, not stopping until she was nearly back to the place where, a little while before, she had parted from Mrs. Wilder. A blind terror had taken hold of her, and even inanimate objects began to assume living shapes and threatening attitudes. All was still again. Not a voice reached her ears, nor the sound of even a distant footfall. Silence and darkness and loneliness, but hidden terrors all about her! Poor, frightened child! And now, taking a wide sweep, the weak and trembling woman made a new effort to reach her home and by a longer and lonelier way. The haven she sought was almost gained when, at a short distance before her, the form of a man came in view and a snatch of song he was singing reached her ears. For a moment she stood still; the impulse to fly back was so strong that she could scarcely resist it. But only a little way beyond was her home, and so near that a cry for help could scarcely fail to reach the ears of her husband, who by this time must have returned. Holding down her vague alarm as best she could, Florence moved on again, but with so hesitating a manner as to make observation certain. As she drew near the man his song ceased, and he paused to await her approach. Had she moved resolutely by, and with

the air of one who was not afraid, he would scarcely have attempted to bar her way. But her disturbed and uncertain movements invited interference, and the man planted himself before her, saying, as he did so, in a light, familiar voice :

"Not so fast, my pretty one! You must give an account of yourself."

His hand was upon her, but she sprang away, and with a loud and frightened cry made an effort to escape, running as fast as her weak and failing limbs would carry her. Help was nearer than she thought.

Robert Sanderson reached "Ivy Cottage" that night before his wife's return. Her absence was felt as an unpleasant surprise, and his home seemed strangely desolate. On inquiry of the servant he learned that Millie had gone early in the evening to visit Mrs. Raynor, and had been away ever since. He was moving back toward the door with the purpose of going after her, when voices were heard without, and immediately afterward the bell rang.

"Why, Millie, dear!" exclaimed the young husband as he drew open the door and met the fresh, sweet face of his pretty wife, "what in the world has kept you out so late?"

There was a shade of rebuke in the way this was said.

"Do you call it so very late?" asked Millie, with a little archness in her face and a something in her voice that had a meaning for her husband which he did not fail to perceive.

"It's considerably after eleven o'clock," Sanderson replied, with less of the imperative in his manner.

"Is it? Well, I didn't expect you home earlier than this, and then I was in pleasant company and enjoying myself. I'm not fond of being alone, you know. Have you been back long?"

"Not over an hour." Sanderson tried to look sober and to assume the air of one who had a grievance.

"A whole hour! Did you find it very

lonesome all by yourself for a whole hour? Poor fellow!"—a little mocking tone in the young wife's voice, but not enough for offense. As she closed the sentence she put up her lips for a kiss. It was given right heartily.

"What's the matter?" Robert saw a shadow on the face of his wife, who had drawn a little away from him.

Millie did not reply. Her eyes were upon the floor.

"What's the matter, dear?" the question was repeated.

"Nothing, nothing," and Millie lifted her eyes again to the face of her husband. There was a smile on her lips, but it held no warmth in its feeble light.

"There's something the matter. I'm not blind. Tell me what it is," and placing both hands on Millie's shoulders, he looked steadily into her eyes.

Without replying, Millie laid her face against his bosom and was very still.

"Tell me, darling!" He tried to lift her face, but she held it down closely to his breast. Drawing his arms about her with a loving pressure, he said: "Don't hide anything from me, Millie, dear. Let me see your thoughts. It will be best so, and always."

For some moments Millie did not stir. When she looked up Robert Sanderson saw tears in her eyes.

"It may be all very weak and foolish, I know, Robert. But—but—"

"What, dear?"

"You won't be hurt or offended?"

"Why, no, darling!"—a little firmer quality in the young man's voice and just a little drawing together of his brows. All this was enough for Millie, and she kept back what was in her thought and trembling on her lips; for she felt that the time had not yet come when she could speak, without giving offense, of what was beginning to lie more and more heavily on her heart.

"Don't think anything more about it, dear. I'm a foolish little thing, and get

strange fancies into my head sometimes. Did you see Lewis Whitcomb to-night?"

There was so complete a change in Millie's voice and manner as she put the question that her husband could do no less than let all which had preceded pass, and give her question a direct answer.

"Yes; I parted from him only a little while ago."

"I saw Florence this evening."

"Did you?"

"Yes; and I was sorry to notice a troubled expression in her eyes. Where did you see Lewis?"

"At the Grant House. We had a game of billiards."

A pause, and then the question from Millie:

"Are you not afraid for Lewis?"

"Afraid! Why?"

Sanderson affected not to understand his wife, but he knew very well what she meant.

"It is said that he is beginning to use liquor rather too freely."

"Oh! as to that, people will say almost anything!" Sanderson replied. "They say it of me, as likely as not."

"Of you! O Robert!" The young man was not prepared for the shocked face and startled motion of the head which followed his light speech.

"There! there! Don't look as if you thought the world was about coming to an end, Millie! Let people talk if they will. It can't do you nor me any harm."

"No; not their talking. It is what we do, and not what people say, that hurts us."

"Exactly so, dear. Now that we are talking of Lewis, I am free to admit that he is not just as prudent as he might be. A single glass never satisfies him. As for me, I can take a drink or let it alone, just as I please."

"Then I wish you would let it alone altogether," Millie answered. "There's no good in it; and it leads to a great deal of harm."

"How long is it since you found that out, dear?" The laugh with which this was said had no contagion in it, and failed to drive the sober look out of Millie's face.

"You really think Lewis in danger?" Millie put the question in an affirmative voice.

"I didn't say so."

"If a single glass, as you admit, never satisfies him, is he not in great danger? Poor Florry! Were it your case, my heart would grow sick with fear." The young wife caught her breath with a sob.

"As it is not, and never will be," replied Sanderson, "let your idle fears scatter themselves to the wind. As for Lewis Whitcomb, it may be that he is in more danger than I had thought. We must look to this."

"Oh! I wish you would, Robert! You and Carl Raynor might save him, I'm sure."

"Save him? One would think, from the way you talk, that he was on the brink of a precipice."

"May it not be really so, Robert? Is there a more awful chasm into which a man may fall than drunkenness?" Millie spoke with an impressive earnestness that was felt by her husband.

"See how Harry Oldham is going! and he was such a steady young fellow when he and Lucy were married."

"It's a shame! I've no patience with him. Why can't he drink like a Christian, and not make a beast of himself?"

"Can he help it?" Millie asked, gravely.

"Of course he can," replied her husband.

"Then why doesn't he do it?"

"Because he won't."

"May it not be because he can't."

"No; he can stop it if he will."

"Are you sure?" The question was put by Millie in so earnest a voice that her husband had to think about the matter before throwing back the impulsive,

"Yes; I am sure," which was rising to his lips.

"Is he not already a slave to his appetite?—and is a slave free to do as he will?" Millie pressed her view of the case. "His appetite is drawing him to shame, disgrace, and ruin; and he knows that as well as you or I."

"Don't, Millie!" her husband raised his hand in deprecation. "You talk frightfully."

"Is it not as I say? Just think, Robert! Would Harry Oldham, seeing all this before him, as he must, move forward a single step, if a force stronger than his will were not impelling him?—if appetite had not become his master?"

"We'll not talk any more about this to-night, Millie. You are getting nervous

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NEXT DOOR NEIGHBORS.

CHAPTER I.

THE DOG WITH THE BAD NAME.

AMOST unneighborly thing to do!" "Didn't I tell you he was as ugly as he looked—it's a beastly shame! even Floss can't stand up for him!"

"My dear Mercy—my good Bob—what is the matter?"

Mr. Average looked up, over, not through, his glasses.

He had been far away with the Greeks and Romans of old time, when the sharp young voices smote his ear, and recalled him to the fact that he was living in the nineteenth century, in a "villa residence," and was the widowed father of three young people.

"Nothing, father, we were only talking about the Danes—about Giles Dane—why don't you say something, Flora?"

Flora, *alias* Floss, looked red and uncomfortable, and painfully in the minority too.

Nobody likes to find all sorts of faults

and excited. I shall have to put an interdict on your going out in the evening."

"No necessity for that. You can keep me at home without any exercise of authority, if you will."

Sanderson did not reply, for he more than half understood what was in Millie's thought.

"Nothing could tempt me out if you were at home."

"It's too bad, I know, dear," the young husband answered, "and I'm going to turn over a new leaf. I had to keep my promise for to-night; but you shall not be alone again for ever so long."

What a happy light came into Millie's face, giving it a new beauty in the eyes of her husband.

and imperfections in a friend, and of late Giles Dane had been showing himself in all sorts of ugly colors. Flora was young and impetuous, and apt to develop likings and dislikes—above all, more than ready to stand up for, and abide by, all Mercy's decisions.

Mercy, the elder by a year, half "engaged" to a hard-working barrister—or, at least, knowing that he loved her, and wished to marry her as soon as money matters made it possible, and allowing him to think of it as a possibility—was, in Flora's opinion, the sweetest and fairest girl in the world—in the very small world bounded by the purple hills that close round the valley of the Neap.

Almost for the first time in her life Floss wished that Mercy held different opinions.

"Well; what about him?" said Mr. Average.

Then Bob and Mercy raised their voices and spoke with vehemence.

"He won't let Jocelyn give the picnic."

"I know 'tis all his fault."

"Perhaps you're mistaken," said Floss; but she spoke without confidence.

"Mistaken! not a bit of it. I met him—Jocelyn I mean—just now, and Mr. Dane was with him, and he said it wasn't to be—something about the weather. Of course, it's all his fault; everybody knows Mr. Dane is under the thumb of his eldest son."

"Well, it was wet yesterday, and the glass is falling—and I daresay Mr. Dane is right—when the weather is finer—"

"Ah! now, papa, you know to-morrow may be fine. It is too bad—and Jocelyn had set his heart on it."

"Who's talking of Jocelyn?" said a gay young voice. They all started. Bob, the last speaker, answered this question.

"Well, all of us—but how on earth did you come in?"

"By and through the door—it is open. I tied my horse to the porch; I gave my father the slip—he stopped to talk to the rector, and here I am."

He spoke to them all—he looked only at one.

Dark-eyed, dark-browed, with something of a soldier's air, Jocelyn Dane was as handsome as his dead mother, as handsome as his half-brother was ugly.

He did not always live at Redhill. He went away on long visits; when he came home he was never at rest.

Evidently his father loved him well, as old men often love the Benjamin of their later life.

For they were always together.

"We were talking about the picnic, and how it's not to be," said Bob.

"It's all my precious brother's fault," said the young man, with a frown. "He can turn my father round his finger; it's too bad. He likes acting as master; he forgets that his mother was quite a common person, very different from mine."

"It's a pity," said Mercy, in her sweet voice. She was thinking how handsome

and brave he looked, and how very, very commonplace, in comparison, George Gilbert, the half-engaged barrister, was.

Floss said nothing. She, too, thought it a pity; she had been looking forward to the picnic—to a pleasant day spent by the river's side; she had hoped that Giles might show the bright side of his character, and be as clever and pleasant as he used to be. It was a real disappointment to her to hear and know that Giles not only did not care about the picnic, but absolutely put a stop to it.

She remembered looks and words of his, and now felt angry with herself for so remembering them.

She was proud, and her pride was hurt at the thought that, as the eldest son of the rich Mr. Dane, he might consider himself superior in social rank to the daughter of Mr. Average. And yet she was sorry, too—sorry because in her heart there had been hopes and dim fancies, and the man with the ugly face and gruff voice had seemed to her a diamond, if a rough one.

And now, on the best evidence, the stone seemed a mere lump of worthless glass.

The tramp of a horse's hoofs on the gravel without roused Mr. Average from his book, into which he had plunged at once after greeting the young man.

"It is my father," said the latter; and presently Mr. Dane, a delicate, bent man, was ushered in.

His first glance was at Jocelyn, the well-beloved of his old age.

Then he shook hands all round, and sank into a chair, as if tired.

"Well, girls," he said, in a sweet, low voice, looking at the pretty girls with kindly favor, "I'm afraid we'll have to put off the picnic. Did Jocelyn tell you?"

"Yes, sir," said Bob. "He told me; I told them."

"My father says 'we,' but you know what *that* means," said Jocelyn in a whisper to Mercy.

"Perhaps some other time," said the old man. The color rose to his thin cheek.

Jocelyn reddened too, and a sudden, fierce look crossed his face, and showed that he was very angry.

"Of course—any other time," said Mr. Average, politely.

"It's easy for father to talk," said Bob (the younger folk had collected together, after the fashion of their kind, in one corner), "but there's no *fun* in putting it off—no reason—and the glen by the river looks lovely now—all the mountain-ash trees in full berry, and plenty of water in the Neap."

Jocelyn was staring into Mercy's sweet face with his handsome eyes, and he said—

"It's enough to make a saint vexed. I had set my heart on it; but what does *he* care? It's all a piece with the rest of his conduct."

"Come and see my new spaniel, Jocelyn," said Bob, restless ever.

"Come with us—I want you to show me—no matter what," said Jocelyn, in a low voice; but Mr. Dane rose hurriedly.

"I am afraid we must go," he said, smiling. "I am a sad invalid, and Jocelyn takes care—very good care—of me." Then, turning to Floss and Mercy: "I must tell Anderson to send you some grapes and flowers; it's a charity to cut them. None of us care for them."

"Or, better still," said Jocelyn, interposing, "won't you, sir, and Bob and Miss Average and her sister come to Redhill; it's not half a mile across the glen by the wicket; the evenings are so fine?"

But Mr. Dane did not add his invitation to that of his son, as the young folk expected; on the contrary, he said only—

"My dear boy, why give them so much trouble? No, no; much better let Anderson send over the fruit and flowers."

Then the old man left the room, and Mr. Average went with him to the door, where the two horses were in waiting.

Jocelyn remained behind him for a moment, to make his adieux, and to say—

"At all events, there's nothing to prevent me from coming over here, by the wicket; that is, if I am not unwelcome here?"

And to this, Bob, the irrepressible, answered with warmth—

"Come by all means; the sooner the better."

And the blush and smile of another than Bob confirmed his words.

"Jocelyn—Jocelyn!" called his father, ever impatient to have him by his side.

"Coming, sir, coming," cried the young man; but still he lingered for a moment to say—

"Don't you—do you ever walk in the glen? It is lovely there in the evening."

There was no time to wait for a response, had it been given, for Mr. Dane was evidently impatient. The two sisters stood together at the window, and watched father and son ride slowly down the straight avenue.

Bob went whistling off to see to his new dog; Mr. Average went into his small study, either to read or write in peace. He was honestly fond of his children, but Bob was rather noisy, and the girls laughed and talked too much to make silence, or even quiet, possible in their presence.

Presently, as her small fingers tapped aimlessly on the pane, Mercy said, softly:

"Mr. Dane isn't as nice as he used to be, Floss, is he?"

Floss was silent for a moment, her quick instinct telling her the true meaning of these words, but she said, evasively:

"He's very nice still, I think; what is the matter with him?"

"Oh! you know. Why, when Jocelyn wasn't here—Mr. Jocelyn, I mean—before we knew him we used to be ever so often at Redhill. Mr. Dane was always asking us; he seemed to like our going. It's only since *he* came home that everything has changed. Of course, 'tis all the fault of Giles Dane. I hate him."

The girl spoke with sincere energy; her cheek flushed; there was an angry light in her blue eyes.

"Mercy," said her sister, very gravely, "it seems to me you've taken up this matter very warmly; look at me, dear; don't turn your face away; do you *like* Jocelyn Dane?"

Mercy's cheeks grew hotter.

"We all like him," she said, faintly; then, with sudden frankness: "How can I *help* liking him, Floss? Isn't he handsome and clever, unlike everybody else? O dear, Floss! I did my best not to like him so much; I really did; but it's no use, and—and—he likes me."

"Mercy! did he tell you so?"

"Only yesterday, dear; and he's waiting to speak to papa and to his father, and I'm so happy; only sometimes I'm a little afraid, and only for that horrid Giles I know things would come right."

Floss felt a keen pain at her heart; then she clasped her sister in her warm young arms.

"My dear! my dear!" she cried, and there were sudden tears on her cheeks; "I do hope, I think all may come right; of course it will; but then, O Mercy! what—what will poor George say?"

In the opinion of Floss, Mercy could hardly do wrong; and yet—poor George! who was working hard in London, working and hoping for the happy future, thinking that Mercy loved him and would wait for him! The next moment she knew that she had made a mistake, not that she was in the wrong, but Mercy contrived to put her there.

"Why do you say that? George Gilbert knows very well that there's no real engagement; how could there be? If I like some one else, he would not wish me to marry *him*. I see how it is; you like Giles Dane, and you think he is always right, and, of course, you'll be against me and poor Jocelyn."

Floss was silent—silenced, but hardly convinced. Mercy saw her advantage.

"You won't, you mustn't abandon us," she said, in her sweetest manner. "You'll be on our side, won't you, and not take the part of Giles Dane? Can't you see that it's jealousy with him; he's afraid his father will get too fond of Jocelyn. You must see how cross he has been, how he has kept Jocelyn away from us and spoiled our picnic, and when Jocelyn wanted to drive us to the old ruins at Bridgeford, managed to have the horses sent away that very day; you know, Floss, that though he did seem kind at one time, and pleasant, ugly as he is, that he is as cross as he can be and sour, and now, if you take his part—"

"I won't, dear, I won't! There, don't cry." (The tears were flowing down her own cheeks.) "I do hope all will come right, and I'll do my best, only don't be unhappy."

For to the affectionate and unselfish Floss, the bare notion of her sister's unhappiness was a terrible thing—more terrible than her own sorrow. She had all her short life been accustomed to love and trust Mercy, and now it seemed natural that she should be the one to give up everything, if only Mercy could be made the happier by such renunciation. She was carried away by her sister's pleading, ready to see all sorts of shortcomings and unkindnesses in Giles Dane's conduct.

"I thought he liked us, but it must have been only my fancy," she said to herself, and she silently determined to fence her heart from all kindly and forgiving thoughts of the elder brother. Cold, unkind, unfair—ah! in that lay the sting, for, to a generous nature, there is nothing more revolting than injustice. Giles, the elder, who (as all the world knew) was able to lead the old man by the nose, how base of him to try and spoil his brother's pleasure; and, in spoiling it, likewise to hinder the pleasant union between Rose Villa and Redhill.

When the day was ended, and the night came and rest, Floss continued very wake-

ful; when Mercy was sound asleep, her sister was lying with wide-open eyes, staring into the darkness.

It was a sad sort of world, after all. The fairest hopes crumbled to dust, the pleasantest day soon ended.

Twelve o'clock; another day had begun. The darkness seemed all the more impressive. Floss crept from her bed and stole to the window. She gently drew aside the curtains, raised the blind, and looked out.

No moon, a few golden stars shining in a sky that was, here and there, black with clouds. The silence, the outlook into the night, calmed her, and brought to her vexed mind a feeling of relief.

Familiar words rose to her lips, but remained unspoken; but with her heart she repeated them—"God is our hope and strength." Ah, as long as *that* was true she felt she could try to bear the troubles that beset her. And presently she crept back into bed, and, after a little, fell asleep.

CHAPTER II.

"I REFUSE MY CONSENT."

THAT new day was a memorable one. When it had been a few hours old, the news had come to Rose Hill that Mr. Dane was dead. Quite suddenly. And for a week the large house on the hill was a place of gloom. Then came the funeral, and then the reading of the will. A few friends attended at this latter ceremony, amongst them Mr. Average. A short and simple document that will was. Mr. Dane left everything absolutely to, or in the power of, his elder son! To Jocelyn he left an allowance of eight hundred a year, but even that was under conditions. Giles had the power to withdraw it. Everybody was surprised, almost indignant. What! give everything to one, almost nothing to the other son! Jocelyn lost his temper (pardonably, as some felt), and blazed out with fury:

"It was all your fault, you know it was;

you worked upon my poor father. I am a beggar."

"No, Jocelyn"—there was as great a contrast between the steady tones and violent accent of the brothers as there was in their appearance; Giles looked all the plainer for his deep mourning, Jocelyn all the handsomer—"not a beggar as long as I live."

But even to himself his words sounded empty words and a mockery. The facts were too plain. Here were the two sons left, the one a rich, independent man, the other absolutely a pauper, unless his brother willed it otherwise.

"And the queer thing about it is," said one friend to the other, "that the mother of the second son was quite the superior of the first wife in rank. She was of a very old West Indian family; now Giles Dane's mother was merely the daughter of a country shopkeeper."

Public opinion ran breast-high, and all against Giles Dane.

Jocelyn was so handsome, so winning, his case seemed so hard, that all faces were set in his favor. Little things crept into the light that made his cause the popular one. Giles made no attempt to stem the current; on the contrary, he took no pains to gain or regain the approbation of his friends.

"What has he done, do you think?" said Bob, bursting into the little drawing-room at Rose Villa; then, not waiting for a reply: "He has *shut up the wicket-gate and the meadow walk*, and now we can't get to Redhill unless we go round by the road."

A dismayed pause, and then Floss said indignantly: "Well, we don't want to go to Redhill;" and Mercy thought, "And Jocelyn can ride round;" she only said aloud, "One can't expect anything better from Giles Dane."

"He's a *beast*," said Bob, who never used discretion. "He has sent away poor Dick Hayle, the young fellow who was groom to Jocelyn, a capital servant, for

no reason in the world but because Jocelyn liked him. I suppose he'll next forbid Jocelyn to come here!"

Dick Hayle had been a general favorite, and his departure added fuel to the flame. Jocelyn was not silent, far from it. Dick was his friend, his favorite, hence the dislike and dismissal that came from Giles. And in his place came a man, elderly, common-place, matter-of-fact; a man Jocelyn declared his step-brother had chosen simply because he was the very reverse of Dick Hayle, and a sort of lout that he, Jocelyn, never could get to like. Dick had often helped Bob when the latter was in trouble with his pony. He was a cheery fellow, with a ready word and laugh, and here, in his place Giles Dane chose to install a silent, stupid elderly clown, who rode doggedly on after Jocelyn.

"Like my shadow," said the angry young man. "And that is not all; Giles, my master—for master he is—has sold my horse, and I have no choice but to take a tame, good-for-nothing cob; I might as well ride a cat."

Floss could not defend Giles. A little peace, a sort of armed neutrality, was established between the houses, but Mercy and Bob were too angry with the new master of Redhill to care to be more than commonly civil to him. Even between the sisters a coolness had sprung up, for Giles—the offending Giles—was bold enough to appear to like Floss, nay, even to aspire to her hand.

And Floss, who in her heart was conscious that she had got to like this ugly, almost forbidding, looking man, who was unjust and unfair and inconsistent, was uncomfortably aware also that Giles was looked upon as an enemy by Mercy and Bob. Mr. Average alone, wrapped up in the doings of the Greeks and Romans, was only dimly aware of the enormities the new master of Redhill was committing, as elder brother. But this little season of half-peace was too soon to become open warfare.

One day Mr. Average, walking calmly in his garden, where Mercy had gone to gather roses, came upon her again with Jocelyn Dane. The blushing face of the one, the eager and almost violent excitement of the other, told a story plain enough to be read even by the mind preoccupied by the affairs of a bygone age. But Jocelyn did not allow the matter to remain in doubt.

"I love Mercy, sir; I want her to be my wife."

"Dear me! This is—it seems to be—a hasty piece of business." He looked round, but Mercy had flown off.

Mr. Average thought of some one else—some one who loved her, and who was working away in London in the hope of winning her. Had Mercy forgotten George Gilbert? who was not brilliant, nor handsome, only a God-fearing, honest, honorable man, who had said to her bravely that he was content to wait, trusting only in her half promise that perhaps—Mr. Average thought of these things, and only half heard Jocelyn's torrent of words, but then, collecting his wits, he said plainly that a good deal depended on what Giles Dane would say.

"You see you are in a manner dependent on him; love is very well, but one can't live on air."

"I know—I see—but of course he can't object. He can't refuse to settle the eight hundred a year on me—a small, a pitiful income compared with his."

"And then—well, I'm afraid you are not very steady. You are here to-day, gone to-morrow—an idle man, excuse me, is a foolish man. I should prefer giving my daughter to a poorer man, with some settled employment, some aim in life."

But Jocelyn grew furious—so furious that Mr. Average was at first scared, then almost angry, though he could make excuses, too, for a young fellow very much in love.

But Mr. Average could not help thinking of George Gilbert.

At length, in reply to hot and eager vows, protestations, and so forth, Mr. Average said that he would speak to Mercy, and ascertain how far her feelings were engaged. And then Jocelyn should ascertain from Giles whether, in case of his marriage, *his* consent and the requisite money arrangements, should follow.

"Eight hundred a year; I don't see why he should not make it a couple of thousand a year. After all, my mother was a De Montmorenci—*his*, only the child of Job Johnson."

While this matter was being discussed, Floss and Giles Dane were holding an interesting conversation in another place. She was walking home from her morning visit to the parish school when he overtook her. And then—well; she hardly knew how it came about, but in a few words, the plain, ungainly elder brother was telling the same story, only in fewer and more collected words, to the one sister that the handsome Jocelyn had just told to the other.

"My dear, I have loved you for some time," he said, "and now I ask you to be my wife. I am ugly and uncouth, but I think I can make you happy—I shall try to do so."

And Floss, quite forgetting at the moment Mercy and Bob, their hot dislike and prejudices, and the strange and unfair conduct of Giles to his unlucky junior, blushed and smiled, and said "Yes," or at least allowed Giles to understand that she meant it.

Of course, here there need be no doubt as to money matters. Giles was a rich man, quite independent.

"I shall see your father, my dear," he said, "if possible, this evening, for I may have to leave home suddenly, and I don't know when I shall return."

Floss was too confused—perhaps too happy—to think of asking him whether he was going. Indeed, the two brothers had more than once left home quite sud-

denly, none knew on what errand. And Giles, if he wished to explain, had then no time to do so, for at that moment his bailiff, an important person, rode after him and begged an interview.

And Floss only heard him say in a low voice (Bob was wont to say that Giles growled like a bear), "This evening, dear—"

Meantime Mr. Average was interviewing Mercy, and a difficult task he had. For Mercy was, if the plain truth must be told, a flirt, and not only a flirt, but a girl most easily swayed and influenced. And she knew very well that George Gilbert had trusted her fully; she knew that he was a better, a worthier man than Jocelyn Dane; but then the latter was so very handsome, so brave and dashing, had so much *savoir faire*, that the hard-working barrister was quite in the shade beside him. At last, and with difficulty, Mr. Average found out, or thought he did, that though she liked poor George, yet on the whole she liked Jocelyn Dane as well, or rather better.

So, when the sisters met, Flora had a secret to confide to Mercy.

"I don't like him, of course," said the latter, frankly. "He has been so unjust, so unkind to poor Jocelyn; it is nothing but jealousy. I'm sure, however, my dear Floss, as *you* like him, and as I'm going to marry Jocelyn, I'll try to think better of him."

Floss felt as if a cold wind had passed over her. She could not deny that Giles had been bitterly unjust to Jocelyn, that he had influenced the old man against him, and in all things done his best to hinder any close intimacy between Jocelyn and the Rose Villa family.

She even felt lowered in her own esteem for liking Giles so well. However, she hoped that as Jocelyn loved Mercy, and as Giles was certain to give his consent, all things should become bright and happy.

Poor Floss! She was hoping thus, and

all unconsciously adding to the castle in the air by many a cheerful and happy fancy, when at one blow the goodly edifice fell to the ground.

It was Mercy who dealt that blow. Rushing into her sister's room, she burst into a passion of tears, and exclaimed :

"I shall never forgive you—never! I shall never forgive *him*—I always knew how it would be!"

"Mercy!" Floss tried to raise her from the floor, where, like a spoiled child, she had thrown herself, but Mercy resisted all entreaties.

"Go to him," she cried. "He is downstairs; he has been with my father."

"Who? Jocelyn?"

"Jocelyn? No! poor fellow. *He*, of course, isn't allowed to come; it is Giles, your precious friend; go to him, don't stay with me; what do you care for me as long as Giles likes you?"

"But what has he done?"

"Done? Can't you guess? He has refused his consent—won't hear of Jocelyn marrying—won't give him a penny—won't settle anything! Of course, he won't allow him to come here. What do you say to *that*?"

"I can't believe it!"

"Can't you? why not? It's all of a piece. He settled his own affair, of course, *he's* all right; my father could not refuse his consent. I congratulate you; I wish you joy; only don't expect me to go to your wedding!"

It was pitiful to see—to hear her.

"Does he—Giles—say why he refuses his consent?"

"No, not a word. He simply refuses it. He has his reasons, he says—of course, he prevented Jocelyn from coming—there was not even a letter."

"I can't understand it!"

"Can't you? I can then. He wants all for himself. Even the poor eight hundred a year, he won't settle that."

She burst into passionate weeping.

"And he gives no reason?"

"None; there it is—oh! you can't excuse him."

And Floss, carried away by the troubled and vehement words, said :

"No, that is true; who could have thought he would have done so mean a thing?"

"I always knew what he was—always; his church-going all a pretense."

This pained Floss, even though she was steeling her heart.

"Oh! dear Mercy; we ought not to say that."

"Oh! I can't be commonly charitable, and I only speak the truth. I say his church-going is only a pretense, going twice a day, and looking so severe, when all the time he is so cruel, so unjust, so ungenerous! No, Floss, if you marry him—"

"Stop, Mercy! don't say that—I shall not marry him."

And when Mr. Average, sorely puzzled, and much disquieted, angry with Giles because he refused his consent to his brother's marriage with Mercy, yet not quite ready to prevent Floss from making so good—that is, so rich—a match, sent up for Floss, the girl absolutely refused to see Giles Dane.

"Tell him so, father, please—I don't want ever to see him, to hear of him again."

It cost her something to say these words, but then it was some comfort to be clasped in her sister's arms, and told that she was a darling, the best of sisters, that she was ten times too good for Giles Dane, and that if she had married him, Mercy never, never would have forgiven her.

There was a good deal of exaggeration in all this, but Floss only felt the injustice of her lover's actions and the resentment consequent thereon.

Giles was not the man to take her refusal quietly. He wrote to her a calm letter, but beneath the calm surface there was strong emotion. He said—

"It is true that I refuse my consent to my brother's marriage—for many reasons. Some of these reasons I cannot tell you, but, believe me, such a marriage would only lead to misery. He could not make her happy. My dear, dear Floss—for you will, I hope, forgive me for writing thus to you—don't judge me too hardly. I cannot permit Jocelyn to marry, that is true. But need that hard necessity change you? Write to me, my dear; your father has given his consent, though, I am sorry to see, he, too, is pained at my conduct. Tell me you will see me; send a few words to me by my messenger—say *come*. Believe me, dear, I have trials hard to bear. I think Heaven has sent you to be my comforter."

But Floss tore up the letter, inclosed it in an envelope, and gave it, with her own hands, to the messenger, bidding him say she had no other reply to send. Then when the deed was done, and could not be undone, she ran up to her room, locked the door, and cried bitterly.

CHAPTER III.

SIX MONTHS AFTER.

THE summer flowers that had decked the garden when Floss sent the torn letter back to the sender were all dead and gone. It was January, cold, dreary, uncomfortable; Redhill was shut up. The next day after Giles Dane's profitless visit to Rose Villa, both brothers suddenly left their home, taking with them only the sedate servant who had replaced Dick Hayle.

For a short time—very short, it must be confessed—Mercy lamented her lost lover. But before the first December snow whitened the ground she had almost forgotten him. For George Gilbert had come again upon the scene, and with Mercy the present always outweighed the absent. Besides, as she said, with a half penitent look, what was the use of caring

for a man whom she should never in all probability see again? And even if she did, Giles Dane was not the man to change his mind, "and I don't mean to marry a pauper."

And as George Gilbert had now effected a standing in his profession, and was, moreover, a rising man, Mercy accepted him gladly, and without further doubt.

Of the Danes, none knew anything. Some said they were living abroad; others thought one or both had died.

The big house on the hill looked dreary, with smokeless chimneys and closed windows.

It was from an old college friend who chanced to "drop in" at Rose Villa, on his way to Torquay, that Mr. Average and Floss heard strange news of both brothers.

Floss kept her eyes bent on her work, but she could almost hear her heart beat when he said—

"Giles Dane was the best fellow I ever knew—so true, so unselfish; why, just look at his conduct about that unlucky brother, or half-brother. Of course you know his mother, the second wife, was mad—mad as a hatter: it was in her family. Jocelyn was twice in an asylum; he is there now."

Mr. Average forced his tongue to say, "We never heard *that*. Mr. Giles Dane never told us."

"Ah! the old man made him promise to keep the secret. Well, sir, what do you think? When the fit came on, and the poor fellow had to be packed off, if Giles did not go there with him, and lived close by all the time, just to be able to see him and be sure that he was taken care of. And when he grew sane and came home, Giles took all the trouble about taking care of him—for of course he had to be watched—and yet did his best always to keep the secret."

Mr. Average could not help sighing; but Floss was dumb.

The visitor—one of those worthies to

whom their own speech is welcome—went on—

"Yes, yes, a sad thing; no hope of any cure. And now I hear the poor fellow must be shut up for life. Not mischievous, but quite insane; knows no one but Giles. It is sad."

Even Mercy, in the warm glow of her new engagement, was sobered and depressed when she was told why Giles Dane had objected to Jocelyn's marriage.

But in an hour or two she forgot Jocelyn, and could think only of George.

Not so Floss. In the silence of the night she remembered Giles, and cried aloud in the sorrow of her heart. She remembered then, too late, many a kind deed and word, the kindly, sweet, and wholesome nature hidden behind the rough exterior.

For days, for weeks after the visit of the elderly gentleman, her life seemed to drag itself on with clogged wheels.

March came, roaring and blustering into the world. The dainty daffodils shook their golden bells to the rough music of the east wind. Down in the hollow, where the Redhill woods on one side gave shelter, Floss liked best to walk. Alone—for Mercy and George were together, and Mr. Average engaged in antiquarian research.

Through the still leafless trees she could catch occasional peeps, as she walked, of the large house, melancholy in its lonely state, cold and bare, with no sign of life about it. Sometimes the underwood stirred as a hare or a rabbit moved briskly along; a few pale primroses peeped from amidst the dry leaves. And it was here, as she stooped to gather some of the dainty flowers, that Giles Dane met her.

"Floss!"

But Floss had no word in reply. He looked pale, paler and thinner than he used to be.

"Have I startled you; I didn't mean."

Then she got some composure and said, "I didn't know that you were at Redhill."

"I came last night—I don't think I shall stay here, unless—"

He stopped abruptly and looked at her.

"Your father, is he well, and Mercy?"

"Both are well."

A moment's silence, then he said, "Does she know—has she heard?"

"Heard of what? I don't know what you mean?"

"That Jocelyn is dead. I fear it must have greatly shocked her. I fear she has not forgotten him or forgiven me!"

"Is he dead? Oh! poor fellow, when did he die?"

"Only a week ago; he did not suffer; he knew me at the end."

"We did not hear of his death." Floss could have added, "and Mercy would not much have cared, even if she had heard of it."

"And I've come back here—well hardly with much hope—only I *did* hope—that you might change your mind, dear, for I've always loved you—always, and I shall love you till I die."

And so it came right in the end. She put her hand into his, and he was content. Not just then, not till some time afterward, did she tell him how the sad secret became known to her. And then it was Floss, not Mercy, who heard with pity all the details of the story—how the poor fellow in his sane hours knew or remembered nothing of his insanity—how Giles slept even in his room, was ever on the watch, went with him to the asylum when the evil time came, and at the last, and to the last, was his best friend, his protector and helper—how Giles had kept the promise to his dead father, and *would* have always kept it—and how, coming back to Redhill a desolate and lonely man, he had still before him the faint hope of winning Floss; all those things he told her.

When the red June roses were in bloom, Floss and Giles became man and wife.

Floss loved her ugly, awkward husband

as well as he loved her, every day getting to know better and value more his sterling worth, and so, hand in hand, he supporting, she leaning on his superior

strength, they trod the path of life, looking forward to the time when they should spend the Day that has no Night together.

MIDGET'S MISCHIEF.

BEULAH MAYNE was an old maid. There was no use denying the fact. She never did deny it; and she had grown used to it. To be sure, she was not yet forty; but that is quite old to one who has as much to look back upon as she had. Her mother had been an invalid, and Beulah was the oldest of ten children. These are the outlines of her story, which may be readily filled in by all who realize the situation. Beulah had found them so completely filled in that never a thought of love and marriage as connected with herself had entered her head. The busy years, which seemed so long in prospect and so short in retrospect, had passed by, bringing the changes which are inevitable in such a family, but seeming so uneventful to Beulah that when she awoke one morning and found herself the last and only one left with her father, she could not realize her position. The mother was at rest, after the weariness and turmoil of her life, "beside the still waters;" the brothers and sisters were settled in homes of their own, or lying near their mother; and the only person left to remind Beulah of how many years had really elapsed was Midget, the bright, romping niece of fifteen, bequeathed to her by one of the brothers who had died. With his last breath he begged Beulah to take his little girl and bring her up to be such a woman as herself.

This she had faithfully striven to do; but many were the sighs she drew over her lamentable failure. The very grain of Midget's nature was antagonistic to the principles of duty and self-sacrifice

that formed the basis of her aunt's character; and she would either overthrow the most careful presentation of correct precepts by some unanswerable question or quaint remark, or else quietly proceed to have her own way with the coaxing protest—"Now, Aunt Beulah, I want to; and you know you want me to do as I want to." And the woman who never thought of her will being an obstacle to any duty, found herself powerless to teach the child the same law of action; and so Midget went on unchecked in her willful but sweet ways, ruling her aunt and her grandfather with a scepter of roses that rarely showed thorns.

It was the thirteenth of February, and Midget stood at the window watching the rain. She could not go out, and she was at a loss how to fill the time until dark and supper should come. Suddenly she caught sight of a team and wagon coming over the hill. Behind the horses was seated Mr. August Templeton, and behind Mr. August Templeton were disposed various sacks, rolls, and other packages indicative of the household provisions they contained, and the whole well-covered with rubber blankets—for Mr. August was a careful man though he *was* a bachelor.

As Midget watched this comfortable-looking establishment pass by, a bright idea flashed into her head—valentines! She would send one to Mr. August and one to Aunt Beulah, and make each think theirs came from the other. It was a wonder she never thought of it before. What fun it would be! and with eyes dancing and feet taking a hop, skip and

spring, up-stairs she flew to carry out her plan.

A sheet of foolscap for one, and a dainty, gilt-edged leaf for the other, were laid out. Upon the first she wrote, in a bold hand:

"DEAR MISS BEULAH:—I take advantage of this day to tell you something of which I have never dared to speak before. I love you and want you for my wife. This is short and may seem sudden to you, but I mean it with all my heart and soul. Should this be favorably received, please let me know.

"Yours in thought for many years,
"AUGUST TEMPLETON."

Upon the other she wrote in fine, neat characters:

"DEAR MR. TEMPLETON:—I have received your valentine, and answer thus: 'I will be thine.'

"BEULAH MAYNE."

Then she duly addressed each, and laid them away until morning. All that evening Beulah noticed that Midget seemed possessed of a spirit of restless witchery that invariably attacked her when she was plotting some prank, but she little thought what this prank meant to her. If she had known of the mischief brewing in that curly head, she would not have stroked it so quietly and gently when its owner curled down at her knee for her good-night kiss; but, happily, she was all unaware of the great commotion which Midget and St. Valentine, assisted by Fate, were preparing to spring upon the quiet of her contented old-maid's life.

The next day was clear and warm, and Midget started, immediately after breakfast, to finish her joke. She put both letters in her pocket, walked straight to Mr. Templeton's door, and gave that astounded gentleman the white envelope with this remark:

"I brought this from Aunt Beulah's to you, Mr. Templeton."

Then back home she went, and gave Beulah the yellow envelope, saying:

"I was coming past Mr. Templeton's, Aunt Beulah, and brought this from there to you."

Midget was careful, in all her fun, not to tell what she called "*a real story*." Beulah was too much overcome with surprise to ask any questions until Midget was out of the room and beyond hearing; so she opened the envelope and read the page—once, twice, three times, before she took in its meaning. Then she turned the envelope over and examined both sides closely, and then read the letter once more. This time her eyes brightened and softened, and a little flush of pink crept up her cheek. She had fine eyes, did Miss Beulah—gray, with a quiet sparkle in their depths that only came to the surface when she was moved; and though her cheeks were thin and her forehead somewhat wrinkled, her mouth was sweet and her smile reminded you of spring sunshine—giving present cheer and holding a promise of constant brightness to come. She smiled now, while she blushed and looked quickly around to see if the message which had so startled her had been tangible to any one else. But all was undisturbed. There was no sound save the soft swish of the early leaves on the trees through the window, and no motion save the flutter of the blue ribbons on Midget's hat, where she had thrown it on a chair.

There was no one to see how pretty Miss Beulah looked. She would have smiled incredulously had a hint of such a possibility been given her; but she was actually pretty with the flush of surprised and gratified feeling that stirs a woman's heart as she reads her first love-letter. It seemed to Beulah first as if a mine had suddenly opened beneath her feet, and she must spring back to avoid being swallowed in its depths; and then, after that

startled feeling passed away, as if a door had opened unexpectedly before her, leading into unthought-of benefits and pleasures; but she could not realize that it would be possible for her to so change her plans of life. She had never had any plans of her own. Her path had always been laid straight before her, with no possibility of two decisions as to duty, and she had walked in it faithfully and willingly—yes, and happily. And now that she was brought to a place where two ways lay before her, and only her own choice to balance one against the other, she was bewildered. What could Gus Templeton want of her for a wife?—Gus Templeton, with his broad acres and handsome figure. She would look well beside him, wouldn't she? and she went over to the glass that hung by the roller-towel and gazed scrutinizingly at the face therein. But her scrutiny was not very satisfactory to its subject, for Miss Beulah never allowed herself the benefit of the charitable judgment she was so ready to exercise toward others; and so the stern eyes and critical mouth which looked back at her gave her little idea of what she really was.

Then she went to the window and looked out toward Gus Templeton's. There lay his farm in plain sight, one hundred and sixty as fine acres as the country could boast, with house and everything as comfortable and convenient as any woman could wish. It was too bad that he had lived so many years alone, and let the garden grow so stiff and un-homelike. Of course, he couldn't keep things as he would if he had a wife. And he wanted her to marry him! That was what his blunt letter said. What an odd letter it was! and still just such a one as a man who had lived for years without woman's company might be expected to write. As for her, she could certainly accept his offer if she wanted to. Any of the other girls would be glad to come and live with their father, and he had enough for two

families. As for Midget, she could stay in either one place or the other, or, what would be more likely to suit her, in both; and Beulah smiled to think of how Midget would break into the monotony of an old bachelor's life.

But did she herself relish the idea of leaving her father and spending the rest of her days with Gus Templeton? She thought of how, away back in the days of her childhood, this same Gus, then a red-headed, brown-eyed, freckle-faced boy, had given her apples at school and stood next above her in the spelling-class. After they grew older he asked her sometimes to go with him to the various neighborhood entertainments; but she was always busy and told him "No," so he ceased to ask her, and soon she left school to be of more help to her mother, and that was the end of their intimacy.

She met him often, but a bow and a few words were the most that passed between them for years, and she had no thought that he ever gave her an extra glance. She knew he was a fair, honest, kindly man, foremost in all progressive and helpful matters, and as for personal appearance, there could be no criticism on that point. His hair was still red, but the freckles had disappeared under a becoming coat of tan, and his eyes were as brown and pleasant as ever.

In short, the more she considered the matter, the more she was inclined to answer favorably. But why hadn't he come in person instead of sending a letter? But never mind; that was his way, and he would have to give her a long time to renew acquaintance with him before she married him. Well, she would think it over until to-morrow, and then write him an answer; and with this partial decision, she drew a long breath and went back to her work right where she had dropped it an hour before. But, somehow, everything she touched seemed full of a new and strangely pleasant significance, and the faster the minutes flew by, the nearer

she felt herself coming to the possibility which had seemed miles beyond her reach when it first presented itself.

It was a pity that Gus Templeton couldn't have seen her, as she went about her work musing upon him, with the sparkle again in her eye and the smile again on her lips; but he had his hands full, though the dainty envelope he held so carefully between thumb and finger didn't look so very bulky. He read it with a puzzled look, ejaculated, "Jim-i-ny!" and sat down, as Beulah had, to think it over. But he reached a conclusion much sooner than she did. It was certainly an answer to a letter which Beulah had received, and supposed came from him. He hardly knew who would have dared to take such a liberty with them both, but the day would excuse the joker, and he would take advantage of the joke. He had been thinking for some time of this very matter, but had not felt quite sure as to the best way in which to approach it. He made up his mind when a boy that if he could he would marry Beulah Mayne some day; and when he saw that it would be years instead of days, he made up his mind that if he couldn't have her he wouldn't take anybody; and so he had waited through all the long time until she was free. He had his own share of troubles and cares. There had been a crippled father, and many debts to pay, and later a profligate brother to nurse back to life and hope, after he had wasted his substance in riotous living. But now all these trials were faithfully encountered, and he had no one in the least dependent upon him. So there was not the slightest hindrance to the fulfillment of his long-cherished plans, unless Beulah herself should raise them. Would she? He had his fears, but determined to face them at once, and prove them false or true.

Accordingly, he proceeded to Mr. Mayne's, where he found Beulah putting dinner on the table, for she had succeeded in doing her usual amount of good cook-

ing, in spite of the preoccupation and turmoil of her thoughts. Indeed, it seemed to her that the vegetables looked specially inviting, and the pudding tasted particularly appetizing, with Gus partaking of them on the side of the table opposite her. She felt somewhat nervous over the thought of what was coming after dinner, and said to herself that she wished he had waited till evening. But perhaps old maids' courting had better be done in prosaic daylight; it seemed more fitting after all. Midget was perfectly unconcerned in appearance, but in reality was watching with some anxiety the result of her trick. Mr. Mayne, of course, was unconscious of any particular interest in the attitude of affairs, and helped to make things comfortable and matter-of-fact for all.

So the dinner was ended, and Gus accompanied Mr. Mayne to the barn, where he and Midget were preparing to start for town. They invited him to ride along, but he made a rather unintelligible reply, and, after seeing them safely out of sight over the first hill, returned to the house, where he entered at once upon the business in hand by saying:

"Well, Miss Beulah, supposing you and I finish planning the arrangement of which my letter spoke, and which your reply encourages."

"My reply!" said Beulah, astonished into dropping the plate she was wiping; "I made no reply yet."

"But I have it here," said Gus, drawing it out of his pocket.

Beulah looked at it an instant, and then, with a dreadful feeling that it was all a mistake, but she must be careful how she showed it, replied:

"I never wrote you any letter, but I received one from you. If mine did not come from you, perhaps it was not meant for me;" and she showed him the yellow envelope in her apron pocket, where she had hidden it under the holder. He took it with considerable curiosity to see where-

unto this joke would grow, read it slowly and smilingly, and then said, gravely:

"I did not send you that letter, Beulah, but I would have sent you one like it years ago if your circumstances and mine had been different, and I should have asked you that question, either by pen or by mouth, within a few weeks now. If I had written that, would you have returned an answer like this?" and he held out the white envelope. It was Beulah's turn to read, with amused curiosity, the rather sentimental effusion that greeted her eyes. She laughed at its absurdity and blushed at its sentiment. But Gus was watching her with the honest, pleasant brown eyes that she had been mentally dwelling upon all that forenoon. There was eager inquiry in them now, and something else that she knew not how to meet, and yet could not turn from. All at once the two ways lay plain before her eyes, and then the one where her single, quiet future lay

faded out of sight, and the other was straight before her, with Gus standing, waiting, at its entrance. She knew now what she wanted; and she answered, as she gave the little envelope once more into his big hand:

"It would have meant the same, though I hope it wouldn't have sounded quite so silly;" and then Gus took her hand along with the letter, and they sat down once more to consider the strange missives. At least, that is what I suppose they did, for the unwashed dishes stood on the table until three o'clock, and when Gus went away at that time, he took both envelopes with him, saying:

"Since you are sure Midget did it, I won't look any further for the writer; but I shall thank her for that piece of mischief as long as I live. Don't ever scold her for it, Beulah."

And Beulah never did.

SIDNEY DEAN.

"ALL THINGS COME TO HIM WHO WAITS."

"**I** KNOWS nottings apout dot. Vat I know is dat Bettine vill pe mine frow all der same in good time."

And Gottfried struck his spade into the rich earth with the strength of a faith that saw already the ripening grapes of the shoot he was planting.

"This is nonsense, Gottfried," impatiently ejaculated his employer, Mrs. Murray, who had ostensibly come into the garden to give some supervision of affairs, but manifestly to reprove at the same time the shortcomings of her gardener in the courtship of her cook. "Do you suppose Bettine is a girl to be won in this way? You should show an interest beyond the dogged insistence that she will be your wife. There is Jacob Schopp dead in love with her, and a girl is more than likely to be carried off by the young man who shows he is desperately in love with her,

and so we shall lose the best of wives and cooks, don't you know, Gottfried?"

"I knows nottings apout it," disclaimed Gottfried, with evident aversion to the discussion of a subject already settled in his mind as unalterably as a decree of Fate.

"She is going off with Jacob now," pursued Mistress Murray, startingly. "I granted her a half-holiday, because I had already given you one, and I thought you had been wise enough to ask her to go with you to the grand picnic before Jacob had opportunity to secure her."

"And what if I dit ask Bettine to go to der picknick?" said Gottfried, in muffled voice, as he pounded a stake for the support of his grape-setting.

"And she declined?" exclaimed Mrs. Murray, indignantly. "The poor girl is dazzled by a dapper grocery clerk."

"I knows nottings apout dot," returned Gottfried, warily.

"There! do you see?" questioned Mrs. Murray, sternly, pointing to the redoubtable Jacob, who with livery outfit was just driving around to the rear of the Murray Cottage. "And you might have had Dan and the dog-cart and taken the prize yourself."

It was doubtful if Gottfried even marked this reference to his lost chance. He was staring in open-mouthed admiration at the buxom maid in picnic finery coming out the basement door and being helped by the smiling Jacob into the shabby-genteel phaeton hired for the occasion.

"Gott in Himmel!" murmured the gardener-swain, leaning upon his spade and gazing wide-eyed at the glowing Bettine, struck he knew not how by the splendor of red ribbons darting out like flames from her festival attire. He did not appear to see Jacob at all. Bettine filled his soul.

"Gottfried, I did not think you were so stupid," complained Mrs. Murray, as the grocer clerk, drawing the reins on a somewhat vicious-looking gray nag, dashed gayly out upon the road.

"Stoopid?" repeated Gottfried, helplessly.

"Yes; to love a girl and let another fellow carry her off before your face and eyes."

"I knows nottings apout dot," persisted Gottfried, firmly, holding fast to his faith; "but I knows Bettine vill pe—"

He stopped in dumb surprise to gaze vacantly after Madam sweeping contemptuously down the garden walk, evidently too impatient and disgusted to wait the conclusion of this stolid assertion so often repeated.

For a little Gottfried trifled with the earth about the roots he had planted, turning his ear half unconsciously to the carol of the robin alight on the topmost branch of the blooming apple-tree beyond him; then, letting his eye rove down the long

garden beds in which no weed had ventured yet to appear, he suddenly gathered up his tools, ejaculating, "Ha! I vill too go to dat May-day."

And without further delay he climbed to his den in the carriage house, made himself very fine, and putting Dan in the market wagon, which best suited his rural tastes, he started solitarily on the holiday's excursion to which he had been urged.

He had not driven a half mile when he overtook Jacob and Bettine stranded squarely in the middle of the road at the foot of a hill, which the gray Spindle, whose reputation Jacob had not previously learned, defiantly declined to mount.

In vain he had striven to move the obstinate beast, who had responded to all exhortations of tongue and whip by a vicious whisk of the tail and a more stubborn bracing of the knees and planting of the feet, which nothing less than a greater power of will and muscle seemed likely to move.

Gottfried, taking in the situation as he drove alongside, burst into a good-natured laugh, which so enraged Jacob that he sprang to the ground, and furiously jerking the bit, began kicking and beating the unrelenting Spindle in a most heartless fashion.

"Ho now! hole on there! hole on!" remonstrated Gottfried, earnestly. "What your hurry, Shacob? A man died vonce vot vas in a hurry. Ha! if I vas sitting in dere besides Bettine, would I care vether dot horse vent up der hill? Vat for you vant to get to der peeknick when you have der peeknick along wid ye already?"

Bettine, with face as red as her ribbons, was sputtering away in the incoherent fashion she had when excited, feeling highly indignant that Gottfried, of all persons, should have happened along at that inopportune moment, when her glory was eclipsed by such a cloud of mortification.

But Gottfried proved a reserve force

wisely sent to their relief. Plucking from his pocket a package of confectionery which Bettine felt sure, from previous experience, had been provided with a view to some unforeseen opportunity to minister to her own saccharine taste, he gently pressed a handful of the sweets to the set mouth of the refractory Spindle, patting her lovingly and talking to her in his most persuasive tones.

There was an instant softening of the vicious eyes, the stubborn knees sensibly relaxed, the planted feet were lifted and stepped briskly up to Gottfried, who, motioning to Jacob to resume his seat, mounted to his own wagon and drove briskly up the hill, followed closely by Spindle, to whom he spoke now and then a chirruping word, anon calling out a laughing jibe at Jacob.

But Jacob liked not this disgraceful leadership by his rival, and at the top of the hill a road sweeping off by a circuitous way to the point of destination tempted him to escape Gottfried's backward smiling glances by turning in that direction, as favored and urged by Bettine, whose face still vied with the hue of her ribbons.

Spindle, taken unawares, jogged along for a few rods in mild indecision regarding the movements of her superior, and then, with sense of something wrong, she suddenly brought up short, and let her feet fly in the direction of Jacob, with a maliciousness that sent a creeping chill down that unoffending young man's spine, and caused him to shrink back with a frightened glance to right and left of him, and a troubled shifting of the reins from one hand to the other.

"I—I think I'll—get out, Betty," he said, with chattering teeth, as Spindle's heels, with another spasmodic fling, shattered the dash-board, and, casting the reins aside, he leaped high over the wheels. Undoubtedly he meant to get Bettine out of danger, too, but evidently satisfied with having ejected the object of her odium, Spindle suddenly darted ahead with the

deserted damsel, who, wisely possessing herself of the discarded reins, held on for dear life, while the buggy, with one broken shaft and splintered dasher, careered down the sloping road in the rear of the triumphant Spindle.

When, a little later, Gottfried came around to the intersection of the roads leading to the pleasure grounds, he found Spindle, with lines trailing upon the ground, composedly nipping the fine growth of young clover by the wayside, while at a little distance, Bettine, still sitting in the phaeton, in which she had started out so gayly with ribbons afloat, was weeping aloud in the demonstrative fashion by which she indicated both her joy and grief.

"Heil! Vat for you cryin' in dot heart-breaking way, mine fraulein?" questioned Gottfried, again driving alongside the detained pleasure-seeker, whose rejection of his early proffered escort he magnanimously ignored. "I haf much to tank Gott, dat you haf got here save, Bettine, mine—"

"Go way! go way! Gottfried Schmidt," broke in Bettine, with a blustering sob, straightening up the fine hat so desperately preserved in that mad jaunt down the hill, though setting now in a somewhat reckless fashion over her left ear. "This all happened along with your meddlin', troublesome, eavesdroppin'—"

"Vhat! und vould you have peen sitting up dere still wid Shacob, if I had not comes along und sdarted ye ahead to dot peeknick, Bettine?" said Gottfried, meekly. "Und vhare is Shacob now?"

"Don't ye talk to me apout Shacob," cried Bettine, with wrath transferred to the real object of her present excited feeling. "I s'pose he has run home, if his shaky legs would carry him. Or, like enough, he's lying up there on the hill agin already, thinking he was throwed out and kilt, instead of jumpin', like a great, scart ninny."

"So, now, so!" said Gottfried, sooth-

ingly. "Shuppose you joost step over in my vaygon, and let us go und look a leedle after Shacob."

"What do I care apout Shacob?" fired Bettine, indignantly, adjusting the hat she had been smoothing with tender interest, indicating her hopeful return to the condition of normal young womanhood.

"Vhell, den, see here, Bettine," opened Gottfried, persuasively, getting down upon the ground with agility and reaching out his arms to Bettine. "Let me joost help you into my vaygon, und after we have peen aroundt py der parson's we will go to dot peeknick—"

"'Parson's'?" repeated Bettine, bridling.

"Yaw—I haf von leedle cabbage-head dot I vas dakin' aroundt to der Vadder Blumenbach."

"But we have passed his house," remarked Bettine.

"But vee can—pass it again, Bettine," returned Gottfried, cheerfully. "Vhill you go along now—or vait for Shacob?"

Bettine tossed her head with an air of rejection, but Gottfried patiently abided her time for the acquiescence he knew would come.

Spindle, meantime, viewing with curiosity these strange human manœuvres, threw her heels with a sudden snort of interest, and wheeling around two or three times, trotted up to interview and inaugurate a small flirtation with Dan, who impatiently laid back his ears and frowned on such levity.

"I'll tell ye vhat," said Gottfried, humANELY; "vee vhill do dis goot turn for Shacob." And catching Spindle with another lump of candy, which appeared a pure waste to Bettine, he tied her securely to a tree to await the capture of the enemy.

"All tings vait for him as comes," misquoted Gottfried, with profound appreciation, getting into the seat, where he had already succeeded in placing Bettine, and driving off in speechless bliss.

The timid Jacob, creeping over the hill at that instant in nervous dread of finding the bruised and senseless Bettine lying helpless by the way, was startled no less, though greatly relieved withal, to discern that brisk and evidently un mutilated young woman sailing off in the distance with his detested rival and champion of the spade, whose vegetable wagon the maid had scorned before this late experience with the phaeton and the man of scales.

"Zounds! he may haf her!" wisely consented Jacob, with reviving hope of comfort in this world. "I want her not! She haf cost me much a'ready!"

And he began looking ruefully over the damages sustained by the festive phaeton, observed meantime by the sardonically smiling Spindle, who, satisfied with the mischievous pranks she had already played on the thoroughly defeated enemy, submitted herself a little later to be attached to the bandaged and strapped up shafts and led meekly back to her quarters by the cautious Jacob, whom nothing again that day would have tempted to the danger of driving. The sad return to town was not cheered by the remembered sparkle of Bettine's black eyes, but by a tender, anticipative longing for the mild sympathy of a pair of pale-blue orbs under the blonde brows of a soft but swift-moving waitress at the table of a neighboring restaurant where Jacob was in the habit of taking his late clerky dinner.

Just at sunset, as Mistress Murray was walking in a daze of color fascination about her gorgeous tulip beds, she was surprised by the sight of Gottfried and Bettine driving in together in a very domestic Darby and Joan fashion.

"Why, how is this?" she asked, coming around presently to the kitchen door, where the pair were alighting. "Did you not go away with Jacob, Bettine? What in the world have you done with him?"

"Oh! nothin', ma'am," returned Bet-

tine, innocently. "He is all safe. I seen him a peakin' out of the Simpson shop as we come past."

"Misses Murray," said Gottfried, very red, and clearing his throat with ceremony. "I haf der bleasure of—of—presenting mine wife—Madame Schmidt—Bettine Totheroth vat vas."

"You astonish me by such rash haste," said the match-making mistress, with some chagrin at finding herself beaten on her own ground. "You ridiculous creatures! Don't you know that I intended making a wedding for you?"

"Vhell! dot wedding—it overtook us while we vas waitin' dar at Vadder Blumenbach's," apologized Gottfried, with the helpless expression of a man overcome by the power of fate. "All tings comes to dem vhat vaits," he added, philosophically, turning to lead the anxious Don forward to the stable, and the waiting provender, which was the reward of his uncomprehended afternoon's exercise, which involved he guessed not what unraveled problem of human destiny.

Bettine, meantime, in her voluble way, was explaining to her mistress the change—the remarkably sudden change—in the situation, from which Jacob had vanished like a shooting star.

"Of course, I never cared nothing about Jacob," she disclaimed, as she descended on the poor fellow's cowardly desertion, which lost nothing under the magnifying glass of her indignant scorn, "but I just thought Gottfried was a leetle too slow an' sure, an' I would teach him one lesson."

"He appears to have proven himself not only 'sure,' but rather *swift* at last," remarked Mistress Murray, a little severely.

"Ya-as—" assented the blushing bride, with suddenly downcast eyes—"I—I don't know how it happened."

"You would if you had lived in a State where you would have needed to procure a marriage license," commented Madam.

"A *what?*?" questioned Bettine, blankly.

A. L. MUZZEY.

OUR SPARE-ROOM.

FOR some time after we had been married we lived at F—.

F— is not a particularly interesting place in itself. It is not town; neither by the utmost stretch of imagination could it be called country. It is exceedingly difficult to get to the city—where I go every day—from there: or to get anywhere else, for the matter of that. But I think our chief reason for going to live there was that we had the chance of taking a house that had been built by a friend of mine for his own occupation, who found, after it was finished, that he would have to live abroad for two or three years. Houses that people build for themselves are always so much nicer than those they build for other people. So we at once de-

cided to take it, and ever since have been trying to get away from it.

We both wanted to live in town. I wanted my club handy, and Margaret wanted the stores. Choosing a new house is a weighty and important matter, and we braced our minds beforehand by many conversations on the subject, and at last began seriously to house-hunt.

We looked at a good many "desirable residences," and saw a few that we liked pretty well, and a large number that we did not like at all. A good many of the houses had just been newly done up for the season—it was the month of February when we began our search—with an evident view of attracting the public. But although they were magnificent with paint

and paper and hard-wood mantelpieces, we frequently found that they were deficient in the less apparent details of drainage, cisterns, and boilers, with which unimportant trifles the landlord had evidently considered it not worth while to busy himself.

Some houses, on the other hand, were not "done up" in any way, but were dark, dirty, and cobwebby, and haunted by cauderous care-takers. It was useless to try and investigate any of this species, as Margaret refused to go any farther than the drawing-room floor, and would not entertain the idea of them for a single instant. "First impressions are everything," she would remark emphatically, when I tried to convince her that painting and papering were not yet lost arts, and that the care-taker would not, of necessity, form part of our establishment.

Our house-hunting was therefore a long business, and we made quite a picnic of it, Margaret declared, for we frequently retired to a confectioner's for afternoon tea, instead of going back to F—— for that meal, which was always a great point with Margaret. She would not have thought the day complete without it. So as the afternoons at the end of February are long and light we frequently walked about looking at houses till nearly six o'clock.

One evening, as we were sitting together in my smoking-room after dinner, talking, as we usually did, about our prospective new house, Margaret seemed suddenly to be struck with an idea.

"Charley," she said, leaning forward in her chair and placing her pretty little forefinger on her pointed chin as she spoke, "there is one thing that our new house must *not* have, and that thing is a spare-room."

"No spare-room!" I cried, nearly dropping the end of my cigar in my surprise. "Why, where shall we keep all our boxes, my dear? and your sewing-machine, which you never use? and—"

"I mean spare bed-room," interrupted

Margaret, reprovingly. "And I wish you wouldn't say 'my dear,' it makes me feel so old."

"Old!" I said, astonished and mystified.

"Yes," returned Margaret. "Mr. Whitelock calls his wife 'My dear,' and they are both over seventy!"

This argument was unanswerable. I did not attempt to refute it.

"Well, then," I continued, "my—my love ("Ah! that's better," said my wife), "would you mind explaining to me your objections to that time-honored institution, a guest-chamber? Are you afraid of a ghost taking up its quarters with us?"

"No," answered Margaret, still keeping her finger on her chin and regarding me with a fixed and steadfast gaze. She had not even blenched when I alluded to the sewing-machine. "But, in town, he who keeps a spare-room keeps an hotel."

It was too true. I dropped the end of my cigar into the grate outright, while visions of Aunt Georgina from L——, "just running up from Saturday till Monday," with her maid, her asthmatic pug, and her array of bottles, coursed through my brain.

Aunt Georgina—she was Margaret's aunt, not mine—had frequently performed this athletic feat since our marriage, and we had soon found out that her "Saturday till Monday" was not by any means the same as that period of time recorded in the almanacs. It was sometimes a week, but more often ten days, and it had been known to extend itself to a month. I do not think we either of us absolutely disliked Aunt Georgina. In fact, if any one had asked us *what* we particularly objected to in her, we should have been somewhat puzzled to reply; but she was like a rich plum-pudding—a little of her went a long way.

They say that everything comes to those who wait. Still more does everything come to those who search long and diligently enough, and in due time our house was found. It was in every way satisfac-

tory. It had been freshly done up with paint, paper, and the newest things in mantelpieces and dados, and a proper attention had been paid to such things as drainage, gas-pipes, and boilers. It was in the right direction; it was close to a car-route; it was only a five-cent-fare to my club, and there was a very tolerable store not far off. In fact, Margaret said that by putting her head out of the bathroom window and craning her neck only a very little, she could just catch a glimpse of it.

But in this world of ours, unfortunately, there is no rose without a thorn; no supreme good without some drawback. Our house had a spare-room.

To be sure, as Margaret observed when we talked this over after quite settling upon the house, we might have known that we *must* have a spare-room, as there were only our two selves, the servants, and a very limited assortment of boxes and trunks to stow away. "And you know you wouldn't like to live in a *very* small house, Charley," she added, "even if we could have found one in this part of town."

I assented to this.

"Anyway," continued my wife, "I shall not furnish the room as a bed-room."

"Well, that was the original idea," I replied.

At last we were settled in our new house. I will not attempt to describe our removal and subsequent establishing of ourselves and our furniture. It was not pleasant to go through the experience, and it is not pleasant to recall it. I think Margaret and I came as near having a quarrel as we ever did in our lives—at that time. It all floats through my mind as I think of it—a confused dream of bedsteads and sideboards in the drawing-room, wardrobes in the dining-room, Dresden china and mirrors in the kitchen, men and strange cats everywhere, tinned-beef dinners, and a general all-pervading atmosphere of straw.

But at last it was all over, and Margaret triumphantly declared that the house looked as if we had lived in it for years. I thought it rather a dubious compliment, but I did not tell her so.

One morning as we were sitting at breakfast, a letter was brought in and handed to my wife. "The postman is late this morning," she said as she took it. I said nothing; I had caught a glimpse of the handwriting and a huge golden monogram on the envelope. It was from Aunt Georgina.

I laid down my knife and fork, and looked blankly across the table at Margaret, who looked blander still. She had just spread a piece of toast with marmalade—although she was in the middle of eating an egg—in sheer desperation and self-abandonment.

"I can't read it," she said presently, tossing the letter across to me. "It looks as if she had written it with her left hand and her eyes shut."

I deciphered its contents with some difficulty, and then read it aloud to Margaret. It ran as follows:

"MY DEAR MAGGIE" ("I wish she wouldn't call you Maggie," I said):—"So I hear you are established in a new town house. I think of running up next Saturday till Monday, just for change of air for myself and Boulotte" (Boulotte was her pug), "and to have a peep at the fashions. May I occupy your spare-room? Of course, you have a spare-room. I know the delightful plan of all town houses. All news when we meet.

"Your affectionate
"AUNT GEORGINA."

To-day was Monday; she had not given us a long notice of her coming.

"To think of her trying to make us believe that she is really only coming from Saturday to Monday," said Margaret, scornfully. "I don't quite see how she could 'peep at the fashions' between Sat-

urday afternoon and Monday morning, unless she is going to study the bonnets in church."

"Well," I said, dividing my morning paper into two, and giving Margaret the part with the births, deaths, and marriages, which she always likes to see, "it's awkward her wishing to come to us just as we have decided not to have a spare-room, but we can easily write and say we haven't one."

"No," said Margaret, shaking her head sagely, "that would never do. In the first place, she would be very much offended; and she mustn't be offended; for you know, Charles, I have some expectations from her—though it is not much." That was very true. "Then," she continued, "our not having her to stay in this house will not prevent her coming up to town. She will come all the same, and stay at an hotel. She will walk in upon us directly, she arrives—Saturday afternoon, very probably. She will, of course, expect to be shown all over the house; and it will strike her as rather peculiar why we have left our large front bed-room on the third floor empty. You know the horrid way she always notices everything. She will bear down upon me with an avalanche of questions, and probably get everything out of me before I know where I am. No! What we must do is to turn that room into some other kind of room—not a bed-room," she concluded, somewhat vaguely.

It was time for me to go to the city, so we did not discuss the matter any more just then.

As I have said, this was Monday, and by Wednesday evening we had not come to any decision about our spare-room. But Margaret had written a polite, though, I am afraid, rather hypocritical note, to Aunt Georgina, saying that unfortunately we possessed no spare bed-room, and entreating her to take up her quarters at the hotel, and give us as much of her society as was possible.

On Wednesday evening we began seriously to discuss our spare-room; time was getting short. Margaret could suggest nothing but a picture-gallery or a private chapel; but as we had no pictures worth speaking of, and there was a church in the next street, the suggestion could hardly be called a good one; and my idea of turning the room into a kitchen—as the sanitary-dwelling folk tell one that the kitchen should always be at the top of the house—was received by Margaret with scorn and contumely.

"Fancy one's dinner coming *down* to one, instead of *up*," she said; "how dreadful it would be. I'm sure I should never be able to eat a morsel."

"I don't quite see the objection," I replied, mildly, "unless you think it would be a 'come-down'; and, in any case, your dinner must go down when you eat it, you know."

Margaret took no notice of this remark. It is always a point of honor with her not to see any of my jokes when they are at her expense. She did not even smile.

"It would be horrible," she went on. "I should feel that the next thing would be, I should have to wear divided skirts and stockings with toes to them."

"I thought stockings always had toes," but Margaret vouchsafed me no reply, not condescending to inform me that she referred to a new system, where the toes of the stockings are separated like the fingers in a glove.

The next day, as I was sitting in my office, a brilliant idea suddenly rushed post-haste into my mind. It was so brilliant, and also I felt that the time was getting on so fast, that I decided to go home at once and communicate it to Margaret. I was rather proud of it, for as a rule I do not have so many brilliant ideas as she has. Therefore I at once left the office, although it was only half-past three, and started rapidly for home.

I dashed up stairs into the drawing-room, where Margaret was sitting.

"O Charley!" she cried; "how you startled me. I was altering a dress, and I thought you were a caller." And she pulled out her paraphernalia from under the sofa, where she had hastily huddled it.

"Margaret," I cried, "I have an idea!"

"What?" she said, and looked as astonished as if I had said I had got a megalosaurus in my pocket.

"I have an idea about the spare-room," I gasped; for I was very much out of breath with my rapid ascent of the stairs. "We will—make it—into—a billiard-room." And I sank into an arm-chair. "Get on your hat, and we will go out and order a billiard-table at once."

"A billiard-room! Of course! the very thing!" ejaculated my wife. "Why didn't we, either of us, think of such a simple thing before?" I was not quite so sure about the simplicity of it—as regarded the cost, at any rate.

When Margaret had got her hat and I had recovered my breath, we sallied forth, my wife perpetually wondering all the way into B Street why we had not thought of such a simple thing before. "Besides," she said, "only think of the cheapness of furnishing a billiard-room. Why, you absolutely want nothing except the table and a few seats."

"A carpet, though, would rather improve the appearance of the room, would it not?" I ventured to put in.

"Well, yes; but a carpet is not furniture."

I was silent, but I did not feel so thoroughly convinced of the cheapness of the arrangement. The cost was certainly the least brilliant part of my idea, I could not help thinking.

Before we went home to tea that afternoon, we had ordered a square of Turkey carpet, a capital second-hand full-sized billiard-table, and a few leather-covered seats to put around the room. The carpet was to be made a fixture the next day; there was no difficulty about that part of the business; but the table and

seats could not be sent till Saturday morning.

It was running things very close! Suppose Aunt Georgina and the billiard-table were to make their entry into the house at the same time? We were not a stone's throw from the Great Western Hotel, and she was sure to come round directly she arrived—she was one of those people who must air their tongues.

But no! On second thoughts, such a horrible rencontre would be unlikely. Saturday is only a half-day and the men would be sure to want to get their work over early. It was also extremely improbable that Aunt Georgina would arrive before the afternoon. Still, in spite of all this, we both felt a little nervous, and we talked a good deal about it during dinner, and afterward when we retired to my little snugger of a smoking-room, opposite the dining-room.

About nine o'clock we heard the postman's knock, and Margaret flew to get the letters. She brought back a post-card from Aunt Georgina, and we nearly tore it in two with both trying to read it at the same time—though there was not much to read. "I shall arrive to-morrow morning at the G. W. Hotel, and shall look in upon you some time in the afternoon," was all the information it gave us.

I drew a long breath of relief.

"What a blessing!" I said. "By the time she arrives here, our spare-room will be a full-fledged, business-like looking billiard-room, and she will suspect nothing."

I am sure we both slept better that night than we had all that week.

Directly breakfast was over the next morning, we began to expect our men. I had taken a whole holiday—or I should say a half one, as I always come home early on Saturdays—in the honor of the billiard-table and Aunt Georgina. When ten o'clock struck, Margaret affirmed it as her opinion that the men were not coming at all. I tried to disabuse her of

this idea. But when eleven and twelve had struck and still there were no signs of them, I began to be alarmed myself, and Margaret walked up and down between the back and front drawing-rooms like a bear in a cage.

I had just gone to my study for a newspaper, when, half way down the stairs, I heard a shriek from Margaret. I hurried back at once. She was standing by the window. "Come! Come!" was all that she could say.

"What is it?" I cried, rushing to the window. "The billiard-table?"

Alas! it was no such vision of bliss. A cab had just drawn up at our door, from the window of which was seen protruding the crumpled black face of a pug and a huge nosegay of flowers.

"Perhaps it is some one come to the wrong house," I said, faintly, catching at a straw. But the next moment this straw was swept away from me, as a stout, fair lady, in a towering floral bonnet, stepped gingerly out of the vehicle, pug in one hand and flowers in the other. It was no optical delusion. It was Aunt Georgina.

In another minute she would be in the drawing-room. What were we to do? Margaret, however, did not lose her presence of mind even in this unlooked-for and awful crisis. In all the five years of our married life I have never known it desert her.

"Now, Charley," she said, emphatically, "what we have to do is to occupy her and keep her in this room till the billiard-table arrives." She looked pale, but dauntless, and I felt my courage rising by force of example.

"Supposing the table doesn't come at all?" I could not help suggesting, distantly.

"It's sure to come," she said, catching her breath: "and try not to look as if anything was the matter."

"Well, and here I am, you see!" cried a high-pitched voice. And Aunt Georgina sailed into the room, pug-dog, flow-

ers, and all, diffusing an overpowering odor of patchouli around her. "I thought you wouldn't mind my dropping in to lunch." (What a lucky thing this isn't the Palace of Truth, I thought to myself.) "I really couldn't wait any longer to see my dear Maggie." (Here she rapturously kissed my wife.) "Besides," she added, candidly, "they had nothing I could eat at the hotel; so I left Hawkins there with my luggage, and came on to you straight. I've brought you some flowers out of my garden. Of course, I know city florists are perfection, but, after all, there's nothing like the real article."

One might have supposed from Aunt Georgina's speech that London florists were in the habit of supplying their customers with artificial blooms. We both murmured our thanks, and our delight at her premature appearance, while I stooped down and patted the pug's broad back by way of conciliating its mistress.

"Ah, isn't she a dear creature," cried Aunt Georgina, seizing her in her arms to kiss her. "You're a beauty, aren't you, my lovey-dovey?"

The lovey-dovey snorted and wheezed so apoplectically, in answer to this endearing squeeze, that it seemed as if it would never be able to get its breath again. So Aunt Georgina deposited her on a velvet covered arm-chair, while she went round the drawing-room, with Margaret's arm locked in hers, her gold double eye-glass up, exclaiming at and admiring by turns everything she saw, while I followed in their wake, trying not to look as nervous as I felt.

Suddenly, in one of the few and distant pauses in Aunt Georgina's conversation, or rather monologue, I again heard the sound of wheels stopping at our door—very heavy wheels this time. By ill-luck she was just nearing the front windows after having made the tour of the room. At once her gold eye-glass was up in its place.

"Why, I declare!" she exclaimed.

"That huge thing looks as if it were stopping at your door. You don't mean to say you've been buying a grand piano, you extravagant children?"

It was the billiard-table!

I looked at my wife, feeling as if my heart, and, indeed, the whole of my inside, were slowly but surely sinking down into my shoes. I wished the earth would open and swallow me up. But the earth, which is seldom as complaisant as one would desire under such circumstances, refused to budge.

Margaret was clasping her hands behind Aunt Georgina's brown silk back. In another moment I felt all would be lost, when all of a sudden, in the back drawing-room, arose an unearthly howling and screeching. Margaret's Persian cat had just strolled lazily into the room, in search of a particular arm-chair, which she loved, when she was roughly accosted almost on the threshold by Boulotte, who, though somewhat averse to attacking her own species, was not particularly afraid of a cat. But Mrs. Fluff, not appreciating the fun of the thing, boxed her ears soundly two or three times, and a regular scrimmage ensued.

Aunt Georgina flew to soothe her howling favorite, while the cat, who had jumped on to a neighboring cabinet, to the imminent peril of Margaret's collection of gim-crack pottery, glowered with angry green eyes at her cowardly assailant, her tail the size and consistency of a sweep's chimney-brush.

It was none too soon! As I looked out of the window, the men were just hoisting the table out of the cart.

"You keep her here," Margaret whispered hurriedly to me. "I must go and look after them, and tell them not to tread heavily." And she vanished from the room.

It is not too much to say that at this moment I was fairly terrified. If I failed I was responsible to Margaret. I felt a violent desire to seize Aunt Georgina by

the arm and march her up and down the room, as they do a person who has swallowed a narcotic poison. A minute more, and the men's feet were distinctly audible tramping past the drawing-room door. If my wife had told them not to tread heavily, they were certainly not obeying her injunctions.

"Dear me!" said Aunt Georgina, putting up her eye-glass as if it enabled her to hear better. "You don't mean to say that you have workmen in the house still?"

"I think it is some men coming to look at the pipes," I replied. Pipes seem usually the things that workmen come to a house to look at, so I felt it was a safe thing to say, though not strictly true.

But Aunt Georgina seemed bent on investigating things for herself. In fact, her hand was already on the door, while a thrill of horror shot through me, when, fortunately, the door itself arrested her attention. Margaret, who is an adept at painting—on anything but paper (that is to say, she paints on wood, china, terracotta, and plush; but paper she says she never can manage)—had spent some weeks in decorating the drawing-room doors, and the result was eminently charming.

"It's very well done indeed—very well done," she said, peering through her glasses at my wife's artistic productions. "Those fox-gloves seem growing up quite naturally out of the ground. By the way, where is Maggie gone to?" she exclaimed, the next moment, sinking down on to a sofa which stood near.

"I—I think she has gone to look after the luncheon," I stammered. "You see we are young housekeepers even yet." And I smiled a deathly smile. I caught a reflection of myself in the mirror opposite, and it seemed to me that I had absolutely *aged* since I had got up that morning. "My hair will be white soon," I thought, "if this sort of thing goes on much longer."

"Dear me!" said Aunt Georgina, suddenly starting up from her seat, and dropping the eye-glasses through which she had been steadfastly regarding me for some time. "While Maggie is busy, why should you not show me all over the house? It will be a capital opportunity, and the stairs will give me an appetite for luncheon."

I groaned inwardly. I had been dreading that she would make this request all along.

"I—I'm afraid there's nothing to see," I stammered, lamely.

"Nothing to see!" echoed Aunt Georgina. "I conclude, if there is nothing worth seeing in the rooms, there are the rooms themselves? Are you afraid of its taking too long? I should think if, as you say, you do not possess a single spare-room to offer a visitor, that is not likely."

This was said rather stingingly, and I felt that it required a decided answer of some kind. Another crisis had come. I screwed up my courage to the sticking-point, though, like Macbeth, I felt that I was nothing without my wife.

"To tell you the truth, Aunt," I began, in desperation, "I am afraid Margaret would not at all like my showing you over the house without her. Indeed, I am sure she would be awfully disappointed. She has been talking about your coming all the week," I went on, warming with my theme, "and looking forward to taking you all over the house and showing you the new furniture herself, and would be awfully cut up, I'm sure, if I were to play Cicerone without her."

I felt my own man again after thus asserting myself, and Aunt Georgina at once looked mollified. It was a happy thought of mine.

I had still another *mauvais quart d'heure* before Margaret made her appear-

ance, during which I industriously plied my charge with photograph albums and books of prints. As for the billiard-table men, I thought they must have taken their departure up the chimney, for I heard no more of them on the stairs.

Words fail me to express how delighted I was when the dear girl came back to relieve guard. I don't think she had ever made me so happy since the day she said she would be my wife. The luncheon bell rang very soon after, and as we were going down-stairs she managed to whisper to me, while Aunt Georgina was attending to her pug, that the table was all right, but the seats had not come.

"So I took the large arm-chair out of your dressing-room, and one or two others, to put against the walls, and the room looks all right and finished off. They've fixed the rack up, too, and it looks lovely. I made the men take off their shoes before they went down again. I told them there was some one ill in the house."

"Margaret!" I said, reprovingly.

"It's all right," she replied; "the cook's got the toothache. There's no deception."

Our ordeal was over and we were safe. We had a most delightful luncheon. Aunt Georgina, who always enjoys her food, thoroughly appreciated it. She was in high good humor, and when afterward we escorted her in triumph over our house, she did not turn up her nose at a single thing, not even at Margaret's many-colored Early-English bed-room candlesticks, which I own I can never hold without a shudder.

Her one disparaging remark was made, when, just as she was leaving the house, she turned round to wife, who was standing in the hall, and said:

"Your house is absolutely perfection; the only drawback to it is, that you have no spare-room."

RELIGIOUS READING.

WAS IT A DREAM?

"CAN you always believe that God is good and that *all* will be well, Mrs. Moore?" I asked, as that good woman was trying to rouse me from a fit of despondency and doubt.

"Yes, dear," she answered, "I can always believe it, because He told me so." Her tone was low and reverent, but without one shadow of fear or distrust.

I waited in silence for her to go on, as I was sure she would. In a moment she said :

"It was while I was an invalid, many years ago, that this happened, and it has always seemed too precious and sacred to tell to any one, but I think He wants me to tell you of it now, Laura, and if it helps you, as it always has me, I shall not be sorry. You tell me I 'always carry the sunshine' with me, but it was not so then in those first weary months of invalidism. I had a strong, inborn desire for an active life, and it was harder than you can believe for me to be still and have no part in the world's work or pleasure. I tried to make my will submissive to the will of the All-Father, but I know now that what I called resignation was only the calmness of one who was too weak to struggle longer.

"Then came a time of peculiar trial to me. My disease took on new and more depressing phases, and, to make it still harder, I was obliged to go away for treatment. My mother, who was my chief earthly help and comfort, could not go with me, so I was often very much discouraged, and then the light and gladness seemed to go out of everything. I wanted to hold close to God, but I could not always do it, and sometimes I wondered, just as you were wondering this morning, how God could be good and let so much happen that did happen. Then questions of reward for well-doing and punishment for evil-doing began to haunt and trouble me, as they could not have done had I not been in a low, morbid state physically, and I, weak, foolish mortal that I was,

took it upon myself to solve the problem of human destinies. I wanted to *know* that every soul would be safe and happy at last. I could not see how any could be happy, knowing some must suffer through an endless eternity. I could not understand how a God of love and wisdom could create a soul if that soul was not to be saved eventually, yet I dared not believe unless I could find some sure 'Thus saith the Lord!' I remember, as if it were but yesterday, the last weary day when I studied my Bible and the commentaries at my command over and over, yet found not that for which I sought. Night found me so tired and confused that I could only repeat the old, old cry, 'Lord, I believe! help Thou my unbelief!' But even this did not bring me rest.

"When I slept it was but to go over again in wearying dreams the useless search of the day. Then I seemed to be telling it all to some sympathetic friend—all my questioning mind doubted, all my loving heart would believe. So earnest was I, so deeply moved, that I awoke, but only to sleep again very soon, when again the vivid dream came to me, just as before, only, while I was still telling of the conflicting hopes and fears, a voice, low and sweet, spoke peace to my soul, saying, in tones of deepest compassion and assurance: 'Do not fear, Flora. Put your hand in our Father's and follow trustingly where He leads. *All will be well in time!*'

"The tones of the voice and the words it uttered thrilled my whole being. I awoke to full consciousness ere it ceased, yet I heard it to the end as distinctly as I hear your voice when you speak to me. I *saw* nothing. The voice seemed to come out of the air above me, low, distinct, and oh! so confident, I could not doubt! Was it only a vivid dream, or did the Father see how troubled I was and how earnestly I sought to know only the truth, whatever it might be, and, in His loving mercy, send an angel to bring me the 'good tidings of great joy'? Once His

will was revealed to His children through dreams and angel visitants—why not yet? Might it not have been the voice of my dear elder brother, who used to guide my childish feet with such tender care before he was called to ‘come up higher’? This was my impression then. It may be he came, sent by God in answer to my earnest prayer, and it may have been but a dream created by the experiences of the preceding day. I do not know—I may never know—but oh! how it rested and strengthened me then and ever since. I believe it with all my heart, for I cannot help it. Since then I have learned better how to study the life and teachings of the ‘gentle Jesus,’ and in them I find room for the ‘larger hope,’ and there I rest with a faith which falters not, neither doubts nor questions. With my hand in His, trying to follow in His footsteps and doing what I can for His honor, I go fearlessly on. I know that God reigns over all, and that His love and mercy are as great as His power. If we meet His love with love and follow Him in good works, it cannot be otherwise than that all will be well. The suffering which sin brings is

the inevitable consequence of that sin, and is never sent by God’s wrath, as some have taught. When the soul turns to the light the Light is there for it. It shines for all, and all may be saved if they will. Let me read you this little scrap of Alice Cary’s, which I picked up this morning:

“I tell you God is good, as well as just,
And some few flowers in every heart are sown,
Their black and crumpled leaves show but as
dust—

Sometimes in the hard soil, sometimes o'er-grown

With wild, unfriendly leaves, they hidden lie
From the warm sunshine, but they do not die.
Pressed from a natural quickening of the night
Of sin or circumstance, through the evil days,
They find their way at last into the light,

Weakly and pale, giving their little praise
Of modest beauty, and with grace most sweet,
Making the garden of the Lord complete.”

“Can that garden be complete, Laura,
till *every* flower shall blossom there? ‘Let
not your heart be troubled’—only trust
Him and wait. Good-night.”

And she left me abruptly, as if she
could bear no farther words—left me com-
forted, but wondering. Was it a dream?

EARNEST.

MOTHERS.

HINTS TO MOTHERS.

A GREAT difficulty in connection with infantile education is the impossibility, in most cases, of getting any one to act in concert with a judicious parent. The less very young children are with strangers the better, for friends, with the best intentions, often destroy by a few hours’ kindness (as they consider it) those good habits that have cost mamma a month’s patient labor to inculcate.

“Let her have what she likes, pretty dear, it can’t do her any harm,” says one. “I’ll put that by for you, darling,” says another. “Allow her to have her own way, little lamb,” exclaims a third. “Oh! my, what a tumble!” puts in a fourth. “Don’t cry, dear, and I’ll beat the floor, naughty floor, to hurt the little love,” remarks a fifth. “What a little beauty!” observes a sixth, “but I see we must not

tell her so.” Oh! no. This is all very bad, but, fortunately, a mother has it in her power to sacrifice her vanity, and prevent her child being seen by visitors of this description. She can keep it in the nursery; but there, unhappily, she will have the danger of servants to contend with. A nurse may do her duty in every respect as a servant, and yet be most unfit to second the infantile education which it is the mother’s interest and duty to promote. The nurse cannot usually understand what slight causes produce great effects; she perhaps never saw anything of the kind before; and she has likely her prejudices to fight against as well as ourselves. Hence the wisdom of endeavoring to find a truly competent nurse. Select a woman, therefore, of sound religious principles—a cardinal point—and if she be also patient, good-tempered, and truthful, you may consider yourself most

fortunate. The positions some mothers occupy in society enable them to secure good servants in all departments; but many persons of limited incomes, those, for instance, who only keep two servants, pay the smallest wages to the "nurse girl," thinking that any one does "to carry the baby about." This is a grievous blunder, for if there be any truth in the strength and durability of early impressions, it is of vital importance that they should be good; and a wise parent will prefer having the best servant for her child, and an inferior one for her house, if she cannot manage to attend to it herself. I have invariably observed that the finest and most intelligent infants are to be found in that class of society where the mother not only nourishes the baby but attends to it day and night. I know a humble, but most admirable, mother, whose husband is a tradesman. Although she has a little servant to keep the house in order, she always looks after the children herself. "I think," she said to me one day, "that if I were rich I should do the same. If I left them alone with such a servant as I can afford to employ I should have to answer for my reprehensible conduct at the last day. I

do my best to instruct them properly according to my ability, and I endeavor to take them with me wherever I go. My eldest girl will soon be as careful as myself, and will relieve me of much anxiety; but this would not have been the case if I had let her run about the streets."

It is not, dear reader, because people are poor that they neglect infantile education, and bring up their children badly, but because they are ignorant; and this ignorance, I regret to say, is as general among the higher as the lower classes. People talk a great deal about systems and national education; it is quite time they did so, and blessings to everlasting

be with those who promote the great cause of moral regeneration; but we must bring the feeling home to our firesides; we must prepare the way for information by imitative and oral instruction, given with the mother's prayers, and hallowed by the mother's blessing. No duty can absolve her from the watchfulness required by her infant. *She* must teach it to bend its little knees, and clasp its little hands, in lisping prayers. *She* must watch and combat the first indications of our sinful, willful nature. *She* must lead it step by step; and her observation, both quickened and softened by the tenderest and holiest affections of which we are capable, will, when aided by thought and comparison, enable her to create correct ideas in her infant's mind before it has the power to express them.

Believe me—and I wish I could stamp this fact upon the minds of all mothers who read these "Hints"—believe me that upon the impressions made on the mind during the first five years of its existence depends the future character of the child—it may be modified, altered, improved, or degraded—but the impressions of that period will never be eradicated.



NURSERY TABLE (CLOSED).

NURSERY TABLE, WITH BATH.

THIS table, with lid and bath let in, inside is of white deal. The height is two feet five and a half inches, the length three feet seven and three-quarters inches, and the width one foot ten and three-quarters

inches; an edge two inches high also goes round the top of the table. This and the top itself are covered with zinc cut out two feet three and one-half inches long, and one foot wide in the middle to hold a bath one foot three and three-quarters inches deep. The water in the bath can

through brass rods fastened on with rings screwed in, and each sixty-three inches wide and twenty-seven and five-eighths inches long, edged with a frill of the same stuff two inches wide, looped back with cotton cord of two colors. Finish the lower part of the table as seen in cut.



NURSERY TABLE (OPENED).

be let out through a hole in the bottom into a tub or vessel placed underneath and stopped with a cork when required, so that the lid fastened to the table part with hinges can be turned down. On a mattress placed over this baby may be laid and partly dressed, the rim of the table, seven and one-quarter inches high at the back and three and three-quarters inches on each side, preventing the mattress from slipping off. Curtains drawn

CLOTHING FOR GIRLS.

I HAVE been asked to give a little space to the needs of girls in their teens. Growing girls require care and attention, as well as babies, one mother reminds me, and she is quite right; though the babies are so helpless, compared to their older sisters, that one is apt to give more time to impressing on mothers the necessity of divining their wants.

A big girl can say if she is too cold or too hot or too tight or if a pin pricks her. A baby can only cry and be restless. All the same, the growing girl requires a mother's watchful care in many ways. A mother should be her girls' best friend—one in whom they can freely confide, whom they can utterly trust, and of whom they have no fear.

"Shall I put Ethel into corsets?" said a mother to me last week. "She is getting a big girl, and wants pulling into shape, I think."

To me this sounded very sad. Ethel was a lithe, active girl, with a complexion like cream and roses. What need to pull her into any other shape than that which clever Mother Nature had given her? Why compress in the faintest degree her developing muscles, her active, bounding movements, her healthy internal organs? Mothers may say what they please about their girls never wearing tight stays or compressing themselves in any way. It is the very nature of stays to press everywhere. The material they are made of is hard and unyielding, and, worse still, unventilating. No muscles can develop, no pores act so healthily, as they ought under such a close covering. Then the steel down the front presses upon both chest and stomach, even if the stays are not tightly laced. The clothing of a growing girl should be light, warm, flexible, and ventilating. I will tell mothers how I manage, and they can alter or modify to suit themselves and their girls. First, a well-fitting bodice of scarlet flannel for winter, and drilling for summer, double or single, as required, fitting like a princess robe close to the figure and over the hips. This bodice can be lightly boned, like a dress, to keep it in good shape, but without any steel. It can be made high or low, with sleeves or without, and should fit as closely as corsets, without their stiffness.

A FEW hints on the subject of keeping children's heads clean, and their hair from getting rough and harsh. Soap is cleansing, undoubtedly, but it often makes the hair harsh; and, moreover, it is injurious to the hair unless it is thoroughly washed out with plenty of water; and this is sometimes a difficult process. Little children do not always like having their heads well

soused. Of course, pure rain water is the very best thing that can be used; and, with rain water, very little soap is needed, or very little of anything else. But when rain water cannot be procured, I have found the yolk of an egg most efficacious. Take care that all the white is removed, and rub the yolk well on to the skin of the head with a piece of soft flannel, then rinse the head with warm water. The egg is easily washed out, and leaves the hair soft, as well as cleansing the skin. Vaseline is very good for the hair; if at all inclined to be dry, rub a little on every day, or every other day. I would most strongly deprecate the use of a tooth-comb; it injures the tender skin and encourages scurf. Vaseline, egg, warm water, and a little patience will remove any ordinary scurf from the head. But if allowed to get bad, as sometimes happens from illness or other causes, it cannot be removed in a day.

DOUBLE KNEES FOR CHILDREN'S STOCKINGS.

THE following recipe for double knees for children's stockings will, I hope, be found useful. They will wear twice as long as the usual single knitted ones, and besides saving endless work in mending afterward, will avoid the shabby appearance that darns in the knees always have. It is not at all difficult to manage.

When a sufficient length has been done in the leg to reach the knee, divide the stitches into half; place the seam-stitch with its complement of stitches on either side on one pin, and the remaining stitches on two pins, then take an extra ball of wool, a little thinner is better, so as to know which is the added wool. Knit with both wools across the two needles, leaving a good end of the added wool when you commence and also when you come to the end of the second needle, where you break off the added wool and knit round the rest of the stocking with the single wool. Repeat this for at least three inches—four inches would not be too much for some children. All that remains to be done afterward is to run in the ends of wool neatly with a needle, and the double knee is finished, and you continue the stocking with the wool you commenced it with.

BOYS AND GIRLS.

A BOY'S OWN STORY.

EDITED BY HIS AUNT NANCY.

NED FINLEY thinks a boy should tell his own story. None of those fellows who put us in books, he says, remember all a boy feels.

But when Ned sits down, spreads out his paper, and dips his pen with the purpose of writing out his experience, his forehead knits in mental agony; he knocks the floor with his heel, clasps his close-shorn head with both hands, dips his pen again in the ink, drops a great blot on his paper, flings out his elbows with a sharp expletive, jumps up and turns over the leaves of *Webster's Unabridged*, flounces back to his seat and upsets the ink, which sadly upsets Ned.

"What's the use of trying?" he gasps, in despair, sopping the inky pool with his handkerchief. "I know how the thing ought to be done, but I can't get the hang of the machinery. I'll tell you," he continued, evidently appreciating my effort to repair his damages—"if you will just write it up, I will tell *you* my adventure with Dick Davis, which is every word true."

"You mean that you will bring the grist if I will turn the mill, Ned?" I suggested.

"Yes, that's it," he assented, briskly. "Are you all ready?"

"The story mill is in order, Ned."

"Well," he began, sitting down first, and then jumping up to oversee the operations of the "mill."

"Nobody but a boy could know how I felt last Saturday morning when Uncle Ben said at breakfast, 'You are not to go to Frank Allen's to-day, Edward.'

"My heart just filled my mouth. I don't know much about hearts, though, except the awful strait I've had learning the circulation of blood through them."

"Why?" I asked, and I felt like an interrogation point all over.

"Because," said Uncle Ben, taking a sip of coffee, just as cool as a giant who crunches a boy at a mouthful, "I don't wish you to go."

"I didn't think that was any reason at all, but I couldn't say anything, for Uncle Ben doesn't allow a boy to 'argue,' don't you know? I didn't want any more breakfast. I made a rush for the hall, where Cousin Ethel was waiting with the game-bag she had been fixing for me, and no end of cautions about being careful with my new gun.

"It's—it's *too* bad!" said she, in a hushed kind of way when I told her what Uncle Ben had done. "And you've been making such calculations all the week! There! there! don't look so dreadfully! Scream, as I do, and have it over."

"I'm not a girl!" I said, savagely, snatching my hat, slamming the door, and tearing off down the street.

"Don't you remember the Professor talking about our being laid up in stratas of ancestral traits or something like that? I guess I must have been stuck in a pretty hard layer of ancestor that day!"

"Half way down town I met Dick Davis, with whom I have been warned not to associate.

"Hello!" he cried, as I bumped up against him without seeing him at all. "Where you going at this rate, I'd like to know?"

"You need not put down what I said. I know I jammed my hat over my eyes in a dreadfully abandoned way."

"Aha!" chuckled Dick, slapping me on the back with a familiarity I wouldn't have borne any other time. "Come on down to Tracy's pond. I'm going to catch some of those imported fish. Get your fishing tackle and come on!"

"But Tracy will fine us," I said.

"Ha! ha! let him fine," laughed Dick. "Aint yer Uncle Ben able to pay?"

"That speech seemed to set my hard feeling toward Uncle Ben all on fire. If he wouldn't let me spend my holiday with my good friend, Frank Allen, I'd just go off in the forbidden company of Dick Davis and let what would come of it. I'm dreadfully ashamed of such feelings now, you know, but I couldn't think about it then."

"So I rushed into the store we were near, and spent the quarter I had in my pocket for fishing tackle for Dick and myself. And then we hurried off to Tracy's pond, where Ethel and I go very often to take nice little sails in our own boat. But not having the key with me, you know, we jumped into an old, dilapidated canoe that belongs to nobody and paddled off, trolling our lines and joking about the surprise of Tracy's black bass, which, for my part, I had no idea of catching. We drew up no end of worthless sunfish and shiners, which we threw back in the water again, but it was all pretty slow work for Dick, who was burning to do some mischief. At last, when I was getting thoroughly sick of him and of this whole thing, and wishing myself in better company, Dick began chaffing about the girls in a disagreeable way, and, to cap the climax, spoke of Cousin Ethel with a familiarity that just made my blood boil.

"Dick Davis," I said, springing up with my oar in hand, "take that back and beg my pardon, or I'll knock you overboard."

"Aha!" sneered Dick, with another speech that made me fly at him with the feeling that he was a pygmy and I a giant, though he is big enough to whip two like me.

"We had a hand-to-hand wrestle, and then Dick's big, burly figure went over the boat head first and I went over after him, determined to have him aboard again in half a minute, all the better, I thought, for such a good ducking. He came up blowing and blubbering like a young whale, and I laid hold of him with the effort to pitch him into the boat. But the poor fellow, who couldn't swim and who was dreadfully scared, just gripped me in a way that crippled my movements, and as I saw the boat floating off without a hand to catch it, I felt as if there was a chance of both of us going to the bottom. I tried to reason with Dick and to make him let go my limbs, but the water stopped my mouth, and it was only by an awful struggle that I got free enough to strike out for a little point of shore that reached out to me like a helping hand. I never can tell how I got there. Dick, who is a fearful coward in water, clung to me like a log, and I nearly gave up a dozen times. And then—I don't mind

telling you—I guess you will understand—when everything grew dark around me, you know—the blackness sort of parted like a curtain, and I saw my mother's face just as it used to look when I started up all frightened and trembling out of some dreadful dream. But she was really with me then—now, you know, she is in Heaven—and do you think she saw my trouble?

"All at once I heard a soft, sweet voice, just like a silver bell, a long way off:

"Ned! Ned! where are you, Ned?"

"I didn't know as the voice was in this world, but I called with all my strength just like little Samuel—"Here! here I am!"

"Then it seemed so long I thought I'd never heard my name at all—it was like a whole eternity—and I was beginning to sink, when a soft swish and ripple like beautiful music sounded behind me, and I managed to turn my head far enough to see a boat skipping over the water with a slight little figure swaying from side to side with the motion of the oars, and looking in the flood of sunshine that just then burst through the clouds like a lovely angel sailing right out of Heaven to help me.

"Nearer and nearer the boat came, bearing straight for the point where Dick and I were clinging for dear life. Closer and closer sounded the swift, swinging paddles, and then I saw that the angel with shining hair all afloat was my Cousin Ethel, whom I had taught to use the oars, and whose management of them is so skillful that I felt a kind of admiration, even in that time of peril, when you wouldn't believe I could have thought of it.

"Bravo!" I managed to shout with a show of ease, just as if I were politely waiting for her to come up, and as the boat shot around I caught it with one hand, steadying myself by the crag, to which I still clung with the other.

"Now, Dick," I said, "if you'll just unhinge from my legs I'll hoist you into port," and Dick, seeing a chance of relief, limbered up wonderfully, clutching at the boat like a hungry dog, and nearly upsetting it, as with Ethel's brave help we managed to tumble him in.

"O Ned!" cried Ethel, in sudden fright, "O Ned! dear boy, you're sinking! Catch hold of the boat—O Ned!"

"Row away, Ethel," I called, with my head just above water—"I'm not going to run another risk of upsetting the boat—I think I can get to shore now."

"Draw yourself up a little by that crag, can't you?" said Ethel, with quick thought. "I'll run the boat close enough for you to drop in."

"So I obeyed the order of the little captain, though I felt weaker than a drowned cat, and fell into the boat like a stupid beetle that looks as if it would never move again.

"Ethel dropped the oars and fell to crying. Queer, wasn't it, when she was so glad? But that's just like a girl. 'Oh!' she said, between her sobs, 'I'm so thankful! I can't do anything but feel how thankful I am.' And then she wiped her eyes, and laid hold of the oars again, while Dick and I lay there, great, lazy hulks, feeling as if we never could lift a finger.

"I'm so afraid, dear, that you will have a dreadful sickness," Ethel said, seeing me beginning to shake with cold in spite of the hot sun.

"Hello! Dick," I cried, starting up, "I say, we'd better relieve Ethel at the oars, and work ourselves up after our little bath."

Dick gathered himself shivering into a heap opposite me, and we pulled off rather feebly, while Ethel, pale and anxious, watched us from the stern. "I'm afraid it's too much for you—only I know it's better for you to do it," she said. "Dear me! how terrible it would have been if I had not got here just as I did! You know I found out what was the reason papa didn't want you to go to Frank Allen's—I had forgotten I ever thought of going there—and I rushed out to find and tell you about it. Jim Brown was just coming up street, and I asked him if he had seen you, and he said yes, he saw you and Dick Davis going to the pond with fishing tackle. And then," says Ethel, softly, not wanting to hurt Dick's feelings, "I knew you were doing something that you'd be sorry for when you found out what papa meant, so I ran in after my hat, and came down here hoping to find you along shore. How awfully I did feel when I saw that old boat drifting about empty, and your shoes and stockings lying on the bank! I called

loud as I could, and when I heard your answer, I knew there was trouble. Unlocking our boat, the key of which I happened to stick in the band of my old sailor hat last night after our row, I pushed out to hunt you up—and O Ned! what a blessed thing it is that I found you! Dear! dear! however did it happen, boys?"

"I'll tell you," blurted out Dick; "I said a rude thing about you, and Ned pushed me overboard for it."

Ethel turned red and white, and looked away from both of us. I knew she hated to have Dick speak of her at all, and I guessed she didn't like me any the less for resenting his impudence. I could see that Dick wasn't going to say he was sorry for his meanness, but he looked so meek and chopfallen that I reached out my hand and said:

"I've had about as hard a time as you, Dick, but if you'll agree to keep a civil tongue in your head when you speak of the girls after this, I'll promise to be your friend."

"I'll agree," answered Dick, very humbly; "I ain't such a mean boy as you think, if I had decent company."

Ethel looked at him pitying-like, just as she would look at a sick animal that she was determined to help, for Ethel is a real little missionary.

By this time we had come to our landing point, and we clambered out, rather weak and forlorn, you know, but with nothing better to do than to get home the shortest way we could. You can guess we didn't want to go through town.

Across lots Dick's home was soon reached, but Ethel and I had to take a wider sweep to avoid meeting people to whom we didn't want to explain just then.

"See here," Ethel said, in her helpful fashion, when we came in sight of home and she saw how I hated to face them all in my shame-faced, water-soaked condition; "you know you will frighten mamma, and you don't feel like answering a hail-storm of questions, so you just run in the carriage-house and give yourself a tremendous rubbing down while I go to your room and bundle up a dry suit which I will smuggle out and toss in that open window. Then when you feel like it, you know, you can tell papa all about your little adventure."

"Wasn't that sweet of Ethel? I declare, I don't know how I should ever have got along without her."

"Half an hour later, when I lay on the veranda sunning myself and not caring whether I ever went hunting or not, Ethel came out and sat down by me with a little lunch which she ate with me, talking as if nothing in the world had happened."

"But it seems almost wicked for us to be enjoying ourselves when we think about poor Frank," she said, finally.

"Poor Frank"? What do you mean?" I asked, just remembering something she had said about Uncle Ben's reasons for not letting me go to Frank Allen's.

"I—I hate to tell you," says Ethel. "The doctor—O Ned! Frank has the diphtheria—what the doctor calls the malignant form—and he forbids anybody seeing him but just the nurse and himself."

"The old tyrant!" I cried, springing to my feet. "I'm *going* to see him right off, the poor chap, suffering there alone and thinking what a royal day we were going to have off on the hills with our guns. I'm going to cheer him up."

"But Ethel was on her feet, too, with her arms around my neck.

"No! you're *not* going a step," says she, with great authority. "That was just the reason papa didn't tell you this morning, because he knew you would do something rash and make trouble all around. You can't help Frank, and you would just be an annoyance hanging around the house and worrying his friends about going in to see him; you must just make up your mind to be patient and wait till it is safe and not against the doctor's orders to visit him."

"But it's just mean!" I fired, "to treat a great, generous-hearted boy like Frank in this selfish, cowardly way!"

"I know it looks that way," said Ethel; "but it is the best way, after all, for Frank

would feel dreadfully to give the disease to his friends, who can do a great deal more for him after awhile if they keep well. I'll tell you. We'll write to him twice a day and take flowers and fruit and everything nice and pleasant, and leave where the nurse can get and take our favors in to him."

"But that won't be hearing what the dear old fellow has to say for himself," I complained.

"No," says Ethel, "but he will send us messages, and we can do more to cheer him than if we get sick and have to be shut up too."

"Still, it's outrageously mean and sneaking, don't you think, to turn your back on a fellow when he's in trouble?" I said.

"And Ethel allowed that it would be if it wasn't for making more trouble by breaking over laws that were just and right. And so she persuaded me to write a little note to Frank, which she would carry over to the doctor to deliver.

"And that's what she's done every day for a week. In fact, we have both of us haunted the doctor's house, though we have not seen him often. But Frank is now able to go out, and I have liberty to visit him to-morrow. Dear old chap! I wonder what we'll say to each other after such experiences. I suppose we'll just look at each other and laugh like idiots.

"I've told Uncle Ben I'm sorry for flouncing away from the breakfast table in such a rude manner that morning, but he will know more about it when he reads this story.

"A pretty lame story, after all, isn't it? I declare, I thought I could tell it better. I wonder if you literary people feel, when you get through with your story, that you've made a botch of it. Well, perhaps you do know how a boy feels, after all. I think I'd better give up story-telling and go out and pick the bugs from the potato-vines."

HOME CIRCLE.

A PLEA FOR SUMMER RECREATIONS.

BOTH as a nation and as individuals we are too little given to holidays and merrymakings.

In the case of the nation, while it is a matter to be regretted, it is the concern of no person in particular, but in the other more responsibility rests on our own shoulders, and we can and ought to institute any needed reform in our own particular cases.

Enjoyable recreation is recreation indeed, but far too often "outings" are taken in a way which brings no benefit to health or any genuine enjoyment. It is a question if much real pleasure is ever experienced by the great crowd of people who throng the fashionable resorts, and rush from "springs" to "seaside," exchanging a small, stuffy room, which provides a view embracing nothing of interest, for another equally small, with an outlook no more enchanting; each resort, however, offering its visitors the privilege of dressing half a dozen times a day, and of experiencing varying emotions of annoyance and envy when they feel themselves eclipsed by others in the matter of dress and other display.

Happily there is a growing tendency to a more sensible form of recreation. The fact that many people during the past few years have avoided crowded places, and sought quiet resorts in the country, among the mountains, or by lakeside or seashore, and that outdoor sports of all kinds are well to the fore, and sun-browned hands considered something to be proud of, shows that we are improving in this respect, and are beginning to mend our ways where they were much in need of repairing.

If a lack of money makes a choice necessary, the question of dress should never gain the day over a pleasure excursion, or make the spending of time in outdoor pastimes impossible. The pleasant summer days, when everything outdoors invites you to come out and enjoy yourself, were never made to be spent

working over anything that can possibly be omitted. The sage advice, to work for a rainy day while the sun shines, may in this case be turned exactly around. There will be sure to come a good many rainy days in every summer, so work rapidly when it rains and save the sunny days free.

The question of clothes is generally considered a serious one. But the lack of this or that in the way of attire should weigh but lightly against the pleasant hours spent in the health-giving game of tennis, or the days when a picnic excursion led us to some enchanting spot which will live in our memory through winter's snows and the pleasures of succeeding summers.

The pleasant pastimes which may be indulged in by both young people and their elders are so numerous and varied that all tastes may be suited. Lawn parties, tennis meets, shepherdess parties, picnics, walking parties, excursions, and last, but not least, camping out, all give a large return of pleasure for the amount of work and expense they call for.

Lawn parties are a very pleasant way of entertaining friends, and are almost certain to be a great success.

The guests may be invited for afternoon or evening, or an hour may be named which will include both. Such parties need not be at all elaborate or expensive, nor do they call for any great amount of work. All that is needed is a shaded lawn, fine weather, pleasant people, simple refreshments, music, and other entertainment. If a day time party tennis and croquet will add to the enjoyment. A good supply of Japanese lanterns make the grounds look gay even in day-light. Plenty of seats should be provided, some of them being easy chairs for the more elderly guests, with rugs spread before them if there should be any dampness on the ground.

The refreshments need not be at all elaborate; tea sandwiches, cake, and ices are all that will be needed if served during the afternoon, while for an evening party

sandwiches, cake, fruit, and ice-cream will be quite sufficient.

A shepherdess party differs from an ordinary lawn party only in the guests being expected to come in the style of dress affected by the china beauties which graced the high mantel-pieces in the days of our great-grandmothers.

Walking parties may have for their object the securing of a certain amount of exercise, the enjoyment of a much-praised view, the exploration of some interesting promising region, the obtaining of some choice specimens of desired plants, or the adding of some bit to an increasing geological collection. But whatever their object, they are a pleasant way of spending a few hours, and one which will be as conducive to health as to pleasure.

Picnics vary from the extended excursion which takes an entire day and a part of the evening to the simple affair which is only a few hours spent in some favorite nook by river or pond or a short climb up among the hills where the luncheon baskets can easily be carried.

These same baskets should contain enough provisions to appease fresh-air-sharpened appetites, but it is not wise to spend hours the day before the picnic baking and boiling in a hot kitchen for the sake of carrying in them unusual dainties.

Often when it is impossible to take an extended trip, and the vacation is limited in length, a few days or a week or two may be spent camping out. Only those who have tried it can know how much real rest and enjoyment can be gained in this way, and they need no urging to repeat the experiment.

There are not many persons who do not derive much benefit from even a few days in the open air. The change from the usual round of duties or pleasures is so great that it gives a complete rest to tired body and mind. The breathing of the pure, fresh air brings strength and new life, and proves a sure panacea for many of the ills the flesh is heir to.

No very extensive preparations need be made for a short stay. A wagon with a cover will afford sufficient protection if a tent is not easily obtained. The men of the party usually prefer to do without any covering save such as is furnished by the foliage of the trees. A very comfortable

sleeping-room can be made for the ladies and children by screwing poles made from saplings to the four corners of the wagon-bed, laying other poles across in the forked tops, and fastening over all a cover of rubber blankets. The space under the wagon can also be used as a sleeping-place or for storing provisions in case of a shower. Each member of the party should be provided with overshoes and gossamer, and should wear flannel suits and heavy shoes.

The provisions provided need not be of great variety, but should be abundant. Bacon, which will be broiled over the coals of the camp-fire as wanted; boiled ham, plain cake, bread, crackers, hard-boiled eggs, pickles, and a large jar of baked beans will, with the fruit, butter, and milk obtained from the nearest farmhouse, and the fish and game provided by the fishermen and hunters of the party, prove all that is necessary.

It is a good plan to pack in pasteboard boxes, which can be thrown away when emptied, provisions to last until the camping-place is reached and through the first day's stay, and pack the other provisions in tin boxes and closely tied bags. Among the stores should be some flour, corn-meal, pepper, salt, baking-powder, and sugar. Baking-powder boxes are good for holding small stores and cake, or tin cracker boxes keep other provisions nicely.

A little mustard, a small bottle of ginger, and a few other simple remedies should be placed together in one box, and with a bundle of old linen be set where every member of the party can find it in case of need.

A book or two may be tucked in a spare corner, and if you can possibly find room for them, put in a hammock, a chair, two or three rugs or pieces of carpet, and rope for a swing. Some twine, nails, a hatchet, screw-driver, screws, and an ax are indispensable.

TWO WAYS OF SUMMERING.

ONE lovely afternoon in September, I sat in the waiting-room of a Boston depot. Every incoming train brought a throng of people from seaside and mountain, where pleasure, rest, and health had been sought. Among the number was

one of my lady acquaintances, with her two children. Espying me, the lady drew near, and informed me that she had been disappointed in not seeing her husband at the train, as she had written to him to meet her. Still expecting him to appear, she took a seat by me to await his arrival.

The lady's health had been very delicate before leaving town, so I promptly inquired if the mountain air had brought back her strength and roses.

"Oh no," she answered. "I am so sorry to tell you that my summering has been of no avail to my health. Talk about reclaiming health and getting rest at a summer hotel, even though it is situated in country solitude! Why, I never had so hard a time as I did there. And I really have come back to our city home to rest and recuperate. What with caring for the children, keeping them out of mischief, and dressing them according to the styles at the hotel, I am worn completely out. I can see now that we made a great mistake in selecting a hotel to go to. In my frail health, and with our limited means, we should have chosen a more private place, where the children would have had more freedom, and where fashion's claims had been left behind. Our hotel bill, together with the many extra expenses incident to hotel life, have been so heavy, that my husband's most constant efforts were required to defray them, so that he has had no rest or recreation all summer. The close confinement has told sadly on his health. The summer in the country, to which I looked so longingly for the restoration of health, has, indeed, proven a failure."

At that instant the cry, "There's papa!" came from the children, and a pale, nervous-looking man approached.

As the family departed, I could but reflect on the many failures and disappointments that come to life through unwise planning.

The above incident gives one way of summering; but the following sketch, which came under my observation three years ago, gives another way, which I hope will prove suggestive to many a weary family longing for an escape from the sight of brick walls, and from the city's heat, to the enjoyment of the country's freshness and beauty.

An ingenuous lady (the mother of three

children) living in one of the large cities, felt the need of a change for her impaired health as the heat of summer approached. Her husband's health had also failed, and a trip to the country would have been a blessing to the whole family. But a moderate salary was their only support, and while it afforded a comfortable living, there was but little for extra indulgences. The wife dreamed of the green fields, the deep forests, and the fresh country air, yet they seemed so far beyond their reach; for she would in no wise consent to a change for herself unless her husband could share the pleasure. And since a suspension of his salary meant the stoppage of their support, such a pleasure seemed an impossibility.

But one night the husband came home with a burning head and aching limbs. For days these symptoms did not abate, and the wife realized that the change which she had regarded as a luxury was now a necessity. The little surplus from each month's salary had been carefully laid away for that inevitable "rainy day." They knew it would be wiser to spend this in giving the overworked husband a rest, than to spend it for medicines and doctor's bills. And so a trip to the country was decided upon.

They gave much wise thought that they might receive the greatest possible benefit from the money they would expend, and this was their plan. A location in the country at a convenient distance from the city was selected. An advertisement for board in a farmer's family was sent to the paper of the village at that point. They received a number of replies, and engaged with the one which seemed best suited to them. There was no tedious, lengthy preparation of a wardrobe, and at but little extra expense they were in a few days installed in their pleasant summer home. Their boarding-place proved to be a delightful country home; their board was moderate, their food was pure and wholesome, and health and comfort, and not the dictates of fashion, guided them in their dress.

The family spent most of the time recreating in the open air; and after a sojourn of several weeks the roses glowed in their tanned cheeks. The children were never so fat before, and the pale, thin parents increased their weight by many pounds.

They all felt that their summering had been a thing of great profit and pleasure.

NELLIE BURNS.

LOVE'S MEASURE.

"THE Measure of Love"—this is the name of a sweet pathetic poem in the December number of our "HOME MAGAZINE," read and re-read until its words go up and down in my heart, bringing sometimes sweet thoughts, sometimes sad, even bitter, ones.

As the lives of one friend and another come up before me, with their bright or dark experiences—my own counted among them—the subject is a fruitful one for contemplation.

The "Measure of Love!" How different a thing it is in different hearts; for some have so much to give, and some, *so little*. We do not mean the love of lover and sweetheart, or husband and wife alone, but also the affection of sister for brother, or friend for friend, which may be made as beautiful and true a sentiment.

The warm, impulsive, ardent nature gives all, with impassioned earnestness, measuring not by "the height of the stars or the depth of the sea." There is no withholding from prudential motives, for fear of change or unworthiness, or that there will not be sufficient return. No sacrifice is too great to make for its dear object, except it be that of being separated from it, and no pains are too great to take for its pleasure. To live in the light of its smile and receive love in return, if not in as great measure, is its chief happiness.

The quiet, deep nature is longer in giving its affection, more cautious and careful to ascertain just how trustworthy the object may be, before placing confidence in it; but when once its feelings are really centred, they are strong as life, or death itself. It makes few demonstrations, and perhaps never reveals the depth of its love unless a call for self-abnegation comes; then its strength is proved in what it will suffer for the beloved one's sake. *It is—*

"The love that no language could e'er express."

The poet speaks thus of it—

"No burden so great that it could not bear,
If thus it might take from your heart a load,
Or drive from your brow a trace of care."

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Then there is the cool, practical, matter-of-fact nature, which accepts love as a natural right and friendship as a pleasant thing to have, provided it does not ask much in return. It gives a pleasant half-way affection, very agreeable while it lasts, generous, bright, and cheery in its character, and often mistaken for the genuine article. But it easily tires, and after awhile coolly and quietly withdraws its regard and transfers it to some other object, without any apparent reason or excuse, save that it is tired of too much love from one person.

"The value of love is not known in gold;
No sure return would the market bring."

No, for so different is the estimate placed upon it by its varied recipients.

"It may cost me much, but to you perhaps
It may seem but a simple, worthless thing."

So many who have it hold it lightly and carelessly, never realizing its full value; while to the tender, loving heart that *gives*, the cost is often sacrifice, self-abnegation, pain of loss, or the bitter pain of misappreciation or coldness.

There are few friendships or loves deep enough, however, we imagine, to stand such tests as some mentioned by the writer from whom we quote. For instance—

"But this I could do, my best-loved friend,
I could give you all with no thought of gain.
I could lock my secret within my breast,
If revealing would give you a moment's pain."

It may be that this is the truest kind of love. It is certainly the most unselfish; yet there are few of us who would consent to be denied that reciprocation of affection which makes life rich with its warmth and glow.

And why should we not desire this, and be unsatisfied without it?

What real happiness can there be in loving, if the object of it is indifferent? if we cannot receive some true affection in response?

"'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all"—

if the fond, sweet feeling was *mutual*. If not, it only made sorrow and devastation in the heart which entertained it.

And a friendship misplaced, betrayed, or thrown back upon its chief giver,

brings, besides the often bitter feeling, a sense of more loneliness and pain than would have been ours if we had not known the joy of friendship at all.

Cultivate a loving, appreciative heart, all ye children of men, for thus ye shall both give and receive untold happiness—riches beyond measure.

"For a friend is above gold; precious as the stores of the mine."

LICHEN.

WHAT A WIFE OUGHT TO KNOW.

VERY few men have the time or the patience to make a shilling go as far as it can; women have. Especially a woman whose one thought is to save her husband from having burdens greater than he can bear; to help him by that quiet carefulness in money matters which alone gives an easy mind and a real enjoyment of life; to take care of the pennies, in short, that he may have the pounds free for all his lawful needs, and lawful pleasures, too.

Surely there can be no sharper pang to a loving wife than to see her husband staggering under the weight of family life; worked almost to death in order to dodge "the wolf at the door," joyless in the present, terrified at the future; and yet all this might have been averted if the wife had only known the value and use of money, and been able to keep what her husband earned, "to cut her coat according to her cloth," for any income is "limited," unless you can teach yourself to live within it; to "waste not," and therefore to "want not." But this is not always the woman's fault. Many men insist blindly on a style of living which their means will not allow; and many a wife has been cruelly blamed for living at a rate of expenditure unwarranted by her husband's means, and which his pecuniary condition made absolutely dishonest, had she known it. But she did not know it, he being too careless or too cowardly to tell her, and she had not the sense to inquire or to find out.

Every mistress of a household, especially every mother, ought to find out what the family income is, and where it comes from, and thereby prevent all needless extravagance. Half the miserable or

disgraceful bankruptcies never would happen if the wives had the sense and courage to stand firm and insist on knowing enough about the family income to expend it proportionately; to restrain, as every wife should, a too lavish husband, or, failing that, to stop herself out of all luxuries which she cannot righteously afford. Above all, to bring up her children in a tender carefulness that refuses to mult "the governor" out of one unnecessary halfpenny, or to waste the money he works so hard for in their own thoughtless amusements.—*By the Author of John Halifax, Gentleman, in the Contemporary Review.*

SPARE MINUTES.

IF you have not tried to make the most of your odd minutes, the experiment will surprise you in its results. Bits of work in a convenient place, ready to "catch up" when callers drop in, are neither unsocial nor "bad form."

Last winter I hemmed a complete set of table linen during the frequent evening calls of a literary friend, who came in informally to chat about current literature. This winter, while waiting for my orders to be filled at the lunch-house where I go for my afternoon meal, I have read Barnes's *History of Rome*, Townsend's *Protestant Queen of Navarre*, and Shakespeare's *Richard II*.

Several years ago I boarded where I invariably had to wait from five to fifteen minutes for breakfast. There were never any books or papers lying about in the sitting-room, for it was an orderly (?) housekeeper that presided, so I crocheted. I made an Afghan for a carriage and one for a sister's baby cab, a skirt for one friend, a hood for another, a jacket for a third, and two scarfs and fifteen pairs of mittens for my school-children!

When I have potatoes or dishes to wash, or stockings to darn, I always have some choice bit of prose or some favorite poem by me, which I should never otherwise have time to learn. And if house-work is a "drudge" to you, as I hope it may not be, this course will help to make it bearable, if not desirable, by the very opportunity it offers for self-improvement.

When I travel a book or pen always

helps the time pass delightfully at some wayside station, where delay would, without it, have been found tedious.

Try some of these ways, and in a year report.

AN EMPLOYMENT FOR LADIES.

THREE is so much written just now with reference to the best means needy gentlewomen have of earning something to make their very small pittances meet, that perhaps a few more words on the matter will not make the subject quite threadbare. I shall endeavor in these few lines to point out a new way of helping these needy gentlewomen, and one which could not be disliked. Mending china would be quite fitting work for delicate fingers, and might well be done by ladies, as it only requires patience and careful handling. I have seen plates and vases of lovely china most exquisitely repaired by ladies, who have also accomplished difficult and exceedingly shattered work of this description, which no shop would undertake to mend. Every one knows if china is sent to be repaired, how expensive the mending is, and often lovely broken specimens are thrown away because a thought has not been given to a possibility of mending them. There are many ladies who would be only too glad if they could have some of their treasures repaired, and at the same time find it in their power to do a kind action. I am quite convinced it is a business gentlewomen could well succeed in, and one that would return them fair remuneration.

A DAY'S JOURNEY HEAVENWARD.

ONLY a prayer in the morning,
Only the wish to do right,
Only an evil act scorning,
Only a burden made light.

Only a small self-denial,
Gladdening the poor or the old,
Only some heart helped in trial,
Only some sufferer consoled.

Angry replies left ungiven,
Sinful thoughts banished away,
And the smile of our Father in Heaven
On thee for well spending a day.

VIRGINIA B. HARRISON.

A MOVE TO THE WEST.

WHEN Abner first spoke of leaving our dear old home in Iowa, and of moving out here to Kansas, I thought I never could, but my better self came to the front, and I consented for "better or worse," and though in the five years that we have been making our home, our new home, here, we have seen shadow as well as sunshine, I cannot say that I have at all regretted the change. Our farm in Iowa was small, and somewhat broken, here we have a large one, plenty of room for ourselves, and the dear, brown-eyed boys, who help so much now to do everything, beautiful prairie stretching as far as the eye can reach. The fall previous to our "final departure," I laid in my store of seeds, bulbs, and everything I could lay my hands on, or should need to help beautify a new place. I took a part of each peony in my dear old garden, placed them in earth in the cellar, and did the same with all the hardy herbaceous plants I had. Having quite a collection, I knew just how I would "hunger and thirst" for my precious flowers the first year. I knew just how many homesick spells I could ward off by working a day now and then in my flower garden. I saved seeds of my prettiest annual vines, cypress, sweet peas, and the good, old-fashioned morning glories, Dianthus pinks in variety, phlox Drummondii, mignonette, candytuft, and many more. Ah! no, none of the fair flowers I had always cultivated were forgotten. The soil around our "dugout" seemed so new the first year, that seeds I planted in open ground did not do so well as I had planned, still, the sweet morning glories came up boldly, and completely covered one side of the rude mansion; and wasn't it "homey" like to go out in the morning, when the dew covered them, and count the many colored flowers! I took solid comfort with that wide sweep of vines. In spite of many obstacles the other flowers did quite well. Drouth troubled them some, but as if to keep me in heart, and to dispel my melancholy, they grew and blossomed here, there, and over yonder. I had a solid bank of mignonette, and if I ever felt that most terrible feeling of homesickness almost overcoming me, I took my sun hat and went to my bank of

mignonette, shed a few tears, and came back with renewed strength. I believe there is nothing will so quickly dispel this feeling as a quiet ramble in your flower garden. You always find something new to interest, and take your mind from sad thoughts. I did not regret my forethought in saving seeds, when they brought us all as a family so much happiness. "Brown eyes" would come running in every day with some freshly opened blossom, declaring "it bloomed just the same as in Iowa," and his little heart seemed full of rejoicing therat.

Little by little we grew into the ways of our new country home (new to us). We suffered but few hardships, comparatively. We were lonely for lack of our old-time friends, but we had our letters, our papers, plenty of books; we were sure to pack up plenty of them. We read aloud during the long evenings of the first winter, and we were surprised to find that time, instead of hanging heavily on our hands, flew by all too swiftly.

With the exception of a few days' illness, the first summer we had almost perfect health. Our almost constant exercise in the open air gave us such appetites as only those in perfect health can pretend to have. How we enjoyed the coarse food! for delicacies were rare. Our tempers were excellent, too, under the new regime. And take one day with another, such happy years are not always found as we spent in our far-away Western home. We did not regret a moment of the time. The making of a new home in a new country has its trials, but it has its pleasures as well, and in many instances these far offset the former.

HYACINTH.

HAPPY LIVES.

NOW and then we meet with a bright, cheerful face which reflects the tuneful song of the heart's melody, a life which seems to run in even, almost musical, cadence, threading its way through sunshine and "green pastures" as does the merry brook, a heart whose very sighing seems to end in a song of hope, the depths of whose despair but lead to nobler triumphs.

Such our fancy almost envies, deeming them blest above their fellows, when a lit-

tle careful observation and inquiry would discover to us that, like the little brook, when they meet with impediments, instead of fuming and fretting against them they turn aside but a little, yielding a bit of ground not worth contending for, and run on in merry haste as before, their own sweet lives the while wearing away the ruggedness and rendering beautiful by its surroundings the monster in their pathway. Like the stream, they, too, catch the sunshine, its broad blaze, its faintest glints; bits of brightness spring up 'neath their influence, the fields are greener for their treading; clouds may overcast, trials and cares may fetter, but the ripple, albeit subdued, of the undercurrent is still heard, and the smile still sparkles the moment the sunshine appears. The current of such lives may not bear upon their bosoms rich freight of the world's treasure, yet their white-winged crafts are skimming along, scattering store of richest blessings as they go, bearing hither and thither a precious freight which largely augments the world's true riches.

Yet lying beneath all of these, the true secret of heart happiness is found where the soul is being attuned day after day while here on earth to Heaven's melody, the "Master's" hand is sweeping the keys and rendering such music as only His touch can evoke. His strong arm is outstretched to save from despair and lead toward higher goals. He is guiding the weak and unsteady feet where else they must falter and fall. Bravely, then, may they with joy march each day toward "God's to-morrow," the reflection of the truly happy life which shall be theirs by and by the while shedding a halo of glory round their pathway.

M. ALICE BROWN.

NO MANAGER.

"I TELL you, Samanthy, she aint no manager!"

The speaker, Mrs. Brown, knitted away vigorously, and peered over her spectacles at her visitor to note the effect of her words.

"Well, I dunno; mebbe she aint, but then she's a dreadful sweet woman, I think."

"So's sugar sweet, Samanthy, but it aint got no strength nor backbone, so to

speak, an' no more has she. A farmer needs a capable wife, if any man does. I don't see how John Peters come to marry her."

"Well, Mrs. Brown, she seems to suit John anyhow. I've been there some since the old gentleman took so bad, an' I'm gittin' to like John's wife fust-rate. Ye know she warn't brought up to country ways, an' seenin' John quit the farm an' went to live in town—why, it was a fittin' match enough. Of course, nobody could foresee that Miss Peters was goin' to be took off so sudden an' the old man laid helpless, an' John have to come back to take keer of him an' the farm. The ways of Proverdence is mister'us."

"Yes, they be, an' so is folks's. Why couldn't John a-married one of his school-mates—a girl brought up to do farm an' dairy work? He could have had his pick. Why, they *do* say his wife don't know one kind of garden-sass from another when she sees it a-growin'! An' then keepin' a hired girl, an' only four in the family 'sides her an' the hired man; it's useless. Why, I used to take care of my old mother—an' them that aint tried it has no idee what a lot of trouble a childish old person is, an' the steps they give; but as I was a-sayin' there was her an' four children an' ten cows to do for, an' I made all my man's clothes to save a tailorin' bill, an' only two blessed hands to do it all; but I had to manage, an', thanks be to goodness, I knew how to! I didn't set down in the forenoon, an' daub paint onto picturs an' let a girl fuss over the dinner."

"Why, John's wife bakes; I never see sech nice puddin's—they jest melt in one's mouth; an' I found out something 'bout them pictures folks talk so much about. She sells 'em down to the city, an' the money they fetch pays the girl an' buys all them purty gimeracks in the house; an' last week she had a box of the loveliest furrin fruit sent up for old Mr. Peters. My! wasn't he pleased, an' how he *did* enjoy the oranges!"

"You don't say! Well, country fruit is good enough for common folks; but I am beat if she sells her picturs! Them that buy 'em must have more money than they know what to do with."

"Did you ever re'lly notice her paintin's, Mrs. Brown?"

"No, not particular. Of course, I see 'em hangin' round when I go to see poor old Mr. Peters, but I aint overly took up with sech vanities."

"They dress a house up wonderful, though. It don't look much as it did in old Mrs. Peters's time."

"No, I guess it don't! My goodness! the work that woman used to do—work that was work, too! No hired girls round them. *She* was a great manager."

"Well, she managed to work herself to death—whitewashin' her cellar in March; but poor, dear woman, she *has* to rest now!"

"Yes, an' her place knows her no more; an' she wouldn't know that neither, if she was to come back an' look around—special her spare room that she was so choice of, an' now it's filled with little totlin' tables an' lamberkins an' pianner an' picturs hung so thick one can't make out the pattern of the wall-paper, an' that's new, too."

"But aint it a *lovely* room, Mrs. Brown? I could set hours an' look around it."

"Well, everybody to their notion. But I should be afraid to sneeze or turn round for fear of knockin' somethin' over. I like chairs set back where they belong, an' tables, too. It must be terrible tryin' to the old man to see sech changes goin' on."

"Oh! he likes it now. Have you been there lately?"

"No, I aint," said Mrs. Brown, dropping some stitches.

"Then you don't know how nice he looks. John's wife has made him two dressin'-gownds, 'cause he sets up so much, an' he does look so fixed up in 'em. They're a kind of cashmere goods; one is trimmed with dark-blue, an' one with brown. You can't think how pleased he is!"

"Yes, he's gittin' childish; anybody can see that, an', of course, she flatters him up."

"Well, I'm sure it's a good thing to have him pleased, aint it? I don't see what makes you so bitter at her. The neighbors aint treated her none *too* well—actin' so queer an' shy; but then I warn't so friendly first off neither as I might a been, an' she's a tender-hearted creetur, too."

"She's dreadful set in her ways, Samanthy, an' aint willin' to take advice. I

found *that* out last time I was there. I told her what a pity it was her baby's skin should be so tanned up; there it was playin' on the stoop an' in the yard right in the sun, an' I offered to make it a slat-sunbunnit myself, seein' she didn't know how; an' she thanked me, but said she wouldn't let her wear it 'cause the sun would do her good an' sunshine was better than medicine. I told her the child's skin would be ruined; but I might just as well have talked to the wind. I was willin' to kindly help her along, as she ain't no manager an' strange to country ways; but if she won't *be* helped—I've done my dooty!"

"Yes. Well, I must be gittin' along home now. Land o' love, Mrs. Brown! there's them Lee boys stonin' your quince bushes!"

The boys scampered away before the indignant owner could give them a piece of her mind.

"Them boys is the plague of the neighborhood!" she said, picking up the stitches dropped in her haste. "I did hope when they was got into the Sunday-school this last time, that they would be done some good to, but they're worser 'n ever, an' only went a Sunday or two: there can't nobody seem to manage 'em; it beats all! Well, good-bye, if you must go. Come agin soon."

A few Sundays later Mrs. Brown made one of her periodical visits to the Sunday-school. She liked to go once in awhile, to see how the children behaved, and if the teachers seemed to have a realizing sense of their responsibility.

Soon after her entrance Mrs. Peters came in, followed by four of the worst boys in town. The superintendent led them to a seat in full view of Mrs. Brown, who scarcely took her eyes off the class during the session.

The boys were washed, clothed, and apparently in their right minds, though it had never seemed before that they had any. They sat very still, with eyes fixed on their teacher's face, as though intensely interested in what she was saying.

"I wonder what under the sun she's tellin' 'em," thought Mrs. Brown. "It can't be anything out of the Bible, 'cause nobody ever kept 'em still in lesson-time afore an' lots has tried."

"I was all took back," she said to her husband at the tea-table. "Nobody never

managed them wretched boys like John's wife did to-day!"

Months passed and Christmas was at hand.

"How we do miss Mrs. Strong!" said some one at teachers' meeting. "She always knew how to manage entertainments, and train the children, too."

But all were willing to make the usual effort, and Mrs. Peters's quiet suggestions were so apt that almost insensibly she was pushed in the place of leader. But her manners were so unassuming that no one thought of being jealous, and all gladly united in carrying out her ideas. The church was packed with a delighted audience on Christmas Eve and all joined in the verdict that it was the best entertainment and the most marvelous tree ever seen there. Even Mrs. Brown was compelled to admit that the affair was "well managed throughout."

Soon after New Year she began to feel strangely. She was tired all the time, and ached dreadfully. First she tried to work it off, and went visiting; then she drank herb tea, and finally bought a bottle of liniment; but there came a morning when she could not rise, and a doctor was summoned. He pronounced her malady inflammatory rheumatism, with prospect of a long siege.

"Good gracious, Doctor! how's my work to be done?"

"Not by you, certainly! You ought to have taken care of yourself sooner; your nerves are very much unsettled, and—"

"Don't talk to me about nerves! I aint never had any. I do despise hysterik folks!"

But in spite of her stoicism, the time soon came when the jar of a door made her tremble, and a careless hand about her poor swelled joints made her scream. She had nerves at last.

Samantha Wood came and took charge of the household machinery, but the invalid required such constant care that the neighbors soon had to assist in night watching, and among the first to offer service was Mrs. Peters; and during the long weeks that followed she was a frequent attendant on the sick woman, grown strangely patient and grateful at last; while nothing was so refreshing to her as the once despised "furrin fruit."

"It's wonderful, Samanthy," said convalescent Mrs. Brown, "it's jest wonderful

what a difference there is in folks! The neighbors is all kind and mean well, but give me Mrs. Peters. Her dresses don't slap and rustle around, an' she steps so soft, an' fixes pillers, an' winder curtains, an' everything jest right! She can move

me without puttin' my bones all out o' joint too; and if she *was* brought up in a city, she's got a faculty for managin' sick folks that's dreadful comfortin'!"

LILLIAN GREY.

EVENINGS WITH THE POETS.

THE MONK'S VISION.

SCOURGED and bleeding in his cloister,
Prayed a weary monk, alone:
"Blessed Father, may this penance
For my grievous fault atone!

"Weak the flesh is, mighty Father!
Yea! my strength is very small.
Turn not from me, oh! I pray Thee;
Turn not from me lest I fall!

"As the golden sun was sinking
From last eve's emblazoned sky,
And the last rays, glancing upward,
Like a halo seemed to lie.

"On the mountain's furthest ridges,
Paused I in the valley then;
Paused to see Thy Revelation
Writ there, for the sons of men!

"And that hour's supremest beauty
Seemed to me with comfort fraught;
Soothed and lightened ev'ry burden,
Banished all perplexing thought.

"Like a strain of sweetest music
Came the sound of Nature's voice,
Saying to earth's weary children,
'Christ, thy Brother saith—"Rejoice!"'

"Ev'ry discord seemed to vanish,
Ev'ry doubting thought to cease;
Gently thro' the twilight stillness
Came the proclamation—Peace!

"Long I lingered; oh! forgive me,
And the vesper bell afar,
Pealed its silv'ry notes unheeded,
Duty's voice had lost its power.

"Heard I not the solemn service;
Heard I not the sacred call,
Lost in selfish meditation
Till the darkness, like a pall,

"Settling o'er the quiet valley,
Roused me from the blessed dream,
And I saw the cloud-flecked heavens
With the stars begin to gleam.

"Startled, sad, and heavy-hearted,
Came I to my cloister's gloom;
All the night in dreary penance,
Knelt I, in this lonely room!

"Lord, I did forget Thy service
And the solemn vesper-prayer,
Yet withhold not Thy forgiveness;
Still bestow Thy tender care!

"I have sinned and been unfaithful;
Many a scourge this breast shall bear;
Let my blood procure my pardon,
Let my groans my fault repair!"
* * * *

Kneeling there, alone and weary,
Saw the monk a sudden light,
And a gracious, tender Presence,
Radiant, pure, serene, and bright.

And a gentle voice spake lowly,
"O my brother! cease to weep;
Am I only in the cloister?
Am I not on hill and deep?

"Am I not in wooded forests
And amid the burning sands?
Am I not in ocean's turmoil
And the world's remotest lands?

"Where thou seekest, there thou find'st
me;
Where thou callest, there am I;
Though I know the soul's great conflicts,
Yet I hear the lightest sigh!

"I was with thee in the valley,
I am present in thy cell;
Hear I only when thou prayest
At the call of vesper-bell?

"Rivers, woods, and sunset glory
Symbolize your Father's love;
Learn the lesson which they teach thee
Of a guardian care above.

"Not from vaulted, grand cathedrals
Doth arise sincerest praise;
But it comes from God's 'first temples,'
Holy groves of early days!

"Ev'ry thrill of adoration,
Ev'ry throb with worship fraught,
Hears your Father in His mansion,
Knows He, too, your inmost thought.

"Asks He not mere formal worship,
Paid at call of vesper-chimes;
Asks He not an empty service,
Rendered Him at stated times.

"Truest homage didst thou offer
When ye lingered in the vale;
Let that mountain be thy temple,
Let your cloister be that dale!

"Seek not pardon by self-wounding;
I have borne thine ev'ry sin.
Shouldst thou yield thy life in scourging,
It could not thy pardon win.

"I'm thy Brother; God's thy Father;
On His love thou mayst rely;
Let His infinite compassion
Draw thee upward to the sky!

"Nature is a revelation,
Speaking to the inner ear;
Sun and moon declare His glory,
And thou, too, the psalm may hear.

"Love the things that God hath given,
Nothing hath He made in vain;
Flowers and birds chant forth His praises;
Look not on them with disdain!

"Priest and church are not God's temples;
Dwells He in the human heart,
Shares thy ev'ry joy and sorrow,
Is of life itself a part.

"Serve Him as the Spirit listeth,
Matters not or where or when;
He will come with consolation,
He will breathe a blessing then.

"Worship Him upon the hillside,
And His Presence, like the dew,
Will descend in blessing on you,
Will refresh your spirit, too!

"Serve thy God without heart-failing,
Perfect love will cast out fear;
When the heavens are bright with glory,
Love Omnipotent is near!"

MABEL CRONISE.

THE TAPESTRY WEAVERS.

LET us learn a New Year lesson, no braver lesson can be, From the ways of tapestry weavers on the other side of the sea. Above their head the pattern hangs, they study it with care, And as to and fro the shuttle leaps their eyes are fastened there. They tell this curious thing besides, of the patient, plodding weaver: He works on the wrong side evermore, but works for the right side ever. It is only when the weaving stops, and the web is loosed and turned, That he sees his real handiwork, that his marvelous skill is learned. Ah, the sight of its delicate beauty! It pays him for all his cost; No rarer, daintier work than his was ever done by the frost! Then the Master bringeth him golden hire, and giveth him praise as well, And how happy the heart of the weaver is, no tongue but his own can tell.

The years of man are the looms of God let down from the place of the sun, Wherein we all are weaving till the mystic web is done, Weaving blindly but weaving surely each for himself his fate; We may not see how the right side looks, we can only weave and wait. But looking above for the pattern, no weaver hath need to fear, Only let him look clear into Heaven—the Perfect Pattern is there. If he keeps the face of the Saviour forever and always in sight His toil shall be sweeter than honey and his weaving is sure to be right. And when his task is ended and the web is turned and shown, He shall hear the voice of the Master; it shall say to him, "Well done!" And the white-winged angels of Heaven to bear him home shall come down, And God shall give him gold for his hire—not coin, but a crown.

ANSON G. CHESTER.

HOUSEKEEPERS.

THE TOP-RAIL CLUB.

"SHE falls out with everybody," said a woman to us the other day, when we were speaking of a kind neighbor, beside whom we had lived, girl and woman, for thirty years, and always found her the one way—true and good.

"Did you never have to bear with her?" was the next question.

And we replied :

"We always remembered that Lizzie was human like ourself; probably she bore with us after the fashion of the soldier, who in speaking of the enemy said, pompously: 'I killed as many o' them as they did o' me!'"

At the next meeting of the Top-Rail Club we brought up this subject. There are always, as Lily calls them, "bold Peters," women who rail out, and require leading, guiding, kneading down—women who delight in saying, "I always speak out my mind;" "I speak the truth at all times;" "there is no shilly-shally about me;" "I make up my mind what a person is as soon as I see the face and hear the voice."

Such women need culture; they should associate with persons who are vastly their superiors; they should read good books, and should learn by observation.

And then in a jolly way we all began to tell what we considered signs of a well-bred gentlewoman. One said she will be decorous in church, not casting her eyes about, turning her head at every footfall, fixing her gloves and clothes, observing others, and showing herself fussy. One said she will show by her clothing, the material, quiet colors, make-up, and style; and then we all laughed at Mary Bennett, who said a well-bred woman never asks questions, and she told us how her Aunt Sylvia was mortified last winter by asking a question of the wrong woman, Mrs. Julia Rive King.

Mrs. King had given a delightful entertainment at the opera house one very cold evening. At its close, Aunt Sylvia,

herself a very charming woman, was jostled against a lady in the hall who was all bundled up in furs and wraps, and for a few minutes the crowd was so great they stood patiently waiting. They spoke to each other, and Aunt Sylvia said :

"What a grand entertainment we have had. I never can hear enough of Julia Rive King to satisfy me. I have heard her six times, and I hope to hear her many more. What a pity she is so homely—her face is downright ugly!"

The two women, mutually pleased, talked on, and then Aunt Sylvia said :

"I beg pardon; I know you, and yet I cannot think when or where I have met you. Your voice is very familiar."

And the woman, bundled up in furs and wraps, kindly answered :

"I am Julia Rive King, my dear madam, and now I don't want you to be grieved or sorry for what you have unwittingly said. I don't mind it at all, and I am so glad you like me. I am flattered by your opinion. I know I am ugly, but it don't hurt me. I am really glad you like me, and I hope the next time I come to your city to give you something newer and better than you have ever heard before."

Unselfishness is one of the "sweet arts." Mrs. King had this, with good temper, tact, and taste. One can have no idea of the value of kindness. Pleasure is very reflective, and if you give it, you feel it; and pleasure which you give by a little kindness of manner returns to you with compound interest. So, on second thought, Aunt Sylvia did not think of the plain face as a homely or ugly one at all.

Mrs. Oaks brought the recipe of a new cake, easy made, and excellent.

Take good biscuit dough, made with baking powder and sweet milk, roll out to about two-thirds of an inch in thickness, spread butter over the same as you would spread a slice of bread, cover with white sugar, roll up in a round roll, as you would jelly-roll, cut off in two-inch thicknesses, set in buttered tins, and bake quickly.

Mrs. Lenox had made a new kind of jelly, with the juice of apples and of wild grapes, carefully pressed out, and the two boiled together with an equal amount of sugar. Her family pronounced it the best jelly they had ever eaten.

Susy told how they used to soften hard water when they lived among the mountains. To a barrel of water she put one gallon of good ashes tied up in a soft muslin sack. The ashes were moved about in the barrel occasionally. The water was as good as rain water after it was prepared, and they never had any bother about carrying their clothes half a mile away to wash on the creek bank, like the other folks did in those regions.

Mrs. Blair—not the Mrs. Blair who had always met with us before, but her sister-in-law, the cooper's wife, down at the cross-roads—told us in hot weather she often made coffee with cold water. Measure the ground coffee and the water, and put it together, and stand it in a cool place, covering the coffee-pot as nearly air-tight as possible, and let it alone. She said after one became used to it they found as much cheer in it as if it were hot and aromatic.

Then we asked a question: How can a working woman go dressed all the time so that she looks neat enough for callers who come suddenly?

We have been puzzled over this question. The woman who milks, churns, washes dishes, cooks, bakes bread, pies, cakes, washes and irons, scrubs, mothers over a family, finds time to read and write and help her children with their lessons, tends the poultry, lives a social life, keeps up pretty well with the times, besides making and keeping the clothing in order, can hardly, at all hours of the day, look neat enough to meet callers. And if she does not she takes the consequences. If she is a Mrs. Jones, fun-making women will say of untidy girls, "You look Jones-y;" if she is a Mrs. Miller, they will say, "kind of Millery;" so that the poor soul almost passes into a proverb or an adage.

We discussed it thoroughly. Mrs. Sweet says she always wears a collar anyhow, a wide gingham apron, with a bosom front to fasten round the neck, puts her hair in order early in the day, and always thinks if she looks well enough to appear

tidy in the eyes of her husband, she will in the eyes of other people.

Mrs. Blair about her work wears aprons made of dress-skirts that cover the whole dress, the belt buttons behind. In making bread or pastry she slips sleeves on over the dress sleeves that fasten at the top with elastic. Both women have white aprons to wear, hanging handy, when the working apron is removed.

Mrs. Stuart always wears every-day dresses in spring, fall, and winter that are made of some kind of worsted or woolen goods. This saves the washing of calico and gingham. A good quality of stuff, good width, half wool, can be bought for twenty-five or thirty cents a yard, and it makes up nicely and looks well. Navy-blue, brown, dark-green, and gray she finds suitable colors to wear.

It was agreed that something white about the neck, collar, ruche, frill, or tie made of lawn, mull, or bobinet lace always made a plain dress appear neater and the wearer "dressed up."

Lily had been at a reception a few evenings before, given at the pleasant home of a dear friend, and out of that occasion comes to us a recipe for lemon-creams which was her contribution that day to members of the Top-Rail Club. It was new to many of us. Made this way: Squeeze a large lemon and grate the peel; add two cupfuls and a half of water and beat it over the fire. While it is heating, rub two tablespoonfuls of corn-starch smooth, and beat the yolks of three eggs. Then stir the lemon-water slowly into the corn-starch, add the egg, and set it on the stove to slowly thicken, like custard that is boiled; sweeten to taste. After it is done beat the whites of the eggs stiff and stir them in; then pour into small glasses and set them away to get cold. These lemon creams are delicious and make a nice addition to the dessert.

Sofie's new hat was commented on. Mary said the milliners had the advantage of us; we had to take whatever we could find, while they had the pick and choice of the great lots opened out before them.

"Do as I did," said Sofie. "I could find nothing that was at all becoming, so I went to work at home among my old trumpery and planned just what I could

out of my material, and this is the result. Ma says it has been a long time since I have had such a handsome hat."

"If I only had somebody to help me, maybe I could plan and accomplish something too," was the reply; "but evenings, when school is out, I am so weary that I cannot do anything else after I look over the lessons for the next day. And then I have no knack of making something out of odds and ends and most nothing, like some girls have."

In the evening when we separated, and Mrs. Oaks and Mrs. Blair rode home with Tom Sawyer's hired man on the tossy hay rigging, we noticed that the teacher and the milliner lingered on the top-rail while they drank from the wayside well, plotting and planning something.

And the next Saturday Sofie spent the whole day with Mary Bennett. And because we write up such of the proceedings of these informal gatherings as are helpful to other women and girls, why, Mary Bennett told us what they did that day, and we think it was just jolly and nice.

We jotted down facts, making of ourself a general-information representative. Hope the girl-readers will be pleased and paid.

They wanted to plan a second-best hat for Mary, so the boxes of "things" were brought up and tipped over on the carpet. Mary's mother was one of those women who see utility in everything. She never burned or threw into the rag-bag or patch-basket any piece, scrap, end, or bit of silk, velvet, ribbon, flower, lace, feather, or anything of the kind. She said, "everything can something do," and had a place for these articles out of the way and safe from moth or meddling fingers. Even her old school-day essays all came in good play for her own and the neighbors' children to use as patterns.

Among the things brought out to look at was a lot of black ribbons of excellent quality, but just as they had been ripped off from garments and hats and bonnets, twisted, creased, wrinkled, in bows and knots and folds so broken that it seemed impossible to make anything of them.

First the knots and stitches were carefully picked out, then they were shaken and brushed clean, a piece of old black silk taken for a sponge, dipped into alc-

hol or ammonia diluted with water, and they were briskly rubbed with it. This cleaned and gave a lustre. Both sides were sponged alike. Then the ribbons were wrapped smoothly around a bottle, one layer over another, just like they are wound on blocks at the store. Long pieces of the same width were wound in one place; below that a narrower kind was put on. The bottle was stood away in a good place for the pieces to get dry, and it came off looking precisely like new ribbon. If it had been ironed with a hot iron, the fresh finish of the edges would not have shown new and nice, like it did.

Then ribbons of other colors were likewise cleaned and freshened after the same manner. Those that were badly soiled in streaks, when cleaned were laid away to be dyed over and used for bits of linings or the hundred things for which girls need scraps of silk or ribbon. Two beautiful pieces with soiled places were cleaned after the formula given by Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher or some woman like her, who was once obliged to practice economy in small things.

They made a paste of equal parts of molasses, corn-meal, and soft soap, and rubbed on the greasy places, which removed the dirt without injuring the color or texture of the silk. The ribbon was wide and elegant, and had been the ties on a bonnet years ago.

One would think this mixture would ruin a piece of silk, but the molasses neutralizes the lye properties of the soft soap, and the meal acts as a scourer, and the goods are nicely cleansed. If the soap be new and strong of alkali, a little water must be added to weaken it.

Sofie had removed a grease spot from her parlor carpet with this mixture with very satisfactory results, not injuring the colors at all.

While the girls were about it they renovated some feathers and tips. A shovel of coals was taken out on the side porch in a corner, some fresh cobs broken up and put on it, and when it got to smoking nicely they held the tips and feathers over the shovel, careful not to get too near the heat, and keeping them in motion till the flattened, crumpled things began to puff up and liven and quiver, and when done they were quite as good as

new. Sofie said she had often dyed over feathers and plumes, and when dried this way they were very pretty. One gets tired of fancy colored ones and is glad to have them changed into black. After they are carefully dyed and dried, the smoke restores their liveliness.

Some good pieces of velvet, which are as valuable as money in the bank, and velvet ribbons were nicely restored by dampening them over steam, placing a hot flat-iron face upward, and laying the back part of the velvet upon the iron and with a clean clothes-brush brushing the face of the velvet. The steam as it passed through the fabric raised the velvet, while the brush acted as a stimulus to liven it up new and fresh, taking away the flattened appearance.

The ribbons came out almost as good as new, no wrinkles or creases showing at all.

The hat they made was out of two old ones, the brim of one and the crown of another.

They did not fool away much time. After the trimmings were a sure thing, the rest came easy enough. The trimming covered the place where they joined together, and the whole hat did not cost anything but the time. Mary's mother had a good dinner for the girls, and the fun and social companionship paid them for the day spent in the inner chamber among the things.

Girls ought to learn to make their own hats and bonnets. We do not want to underrate the milliner. But a little lady told us that it was generally estimated that milliners made about one hundred per cent. profit. Now for a poor girl this is too bad. Any girl with good taste can, in half a day at most, save all that for herself.

Good material can be repeatedly worked over, especially for "second best" hats, so that a few good things each season will keep good the supply.

Sofie told Mary she must be more careful of her best dresses. It would not do to hang away a cashmere or silk with the grime of dust in its folds.

The longer dust or dirt stays in a garment, the harder it is to remove it, and the more it discolors the cloth; besides that, it works round among the tiny fibres of the cloth, and really cuts them off and

makes the material wear out sooner than if kept clean. Without exception, it is economical to keep one's clothing perfectly neat.

She said she always used a very fine old piece of flannel to brush silk, and a soft silk handkerchief to brush cashmere and woolens.

Mary's "tailor-made" suits are beautiful. They fit like wax. With them she wears only plain collars and cuffs, with a simple pin or gold button.

We all consult Mary's taste, even fat old Mrs. Kinkaid; but we do not do as she did. She will weigh one hundred and eighty, and one of her best dresses is some shade of red, very dark and pretty for a girl, or a small, graceful woman, but it makes her seem of prodigious size.

She does not believe that a plain black dress apparently relieves a fleshy lady of about one-fourth of her avoirdupois, but this is a fact. And there is a distinguished air of elegance about a rich black dress which a bright one can never attain. Bright colors appeal to the eye and excite the attention, while dark, self colors are unobtrusive and elegant and always in good taste.

In a perfectly fitting dress a woman will generally look like a lady, while if badly fitting she will look like a dowdy. Many women will remember the fashion of little black sacques twenty years ago, made of silk, to wear for outside wraps.

Those wraps hid a multitude of bad fits. After they were not worn, many a poor woman felt awkward and ill at ease and did not know what to do with her arms, and the pitiful reason was she had hidden her imperfections so long that she could not stand the light of day. Any of those women now, since the era of good fits and tailor-made dresses, would be sorry to hide her fine figure in any kind of a loose or half-fitting sacque. We warrant a good many of them shiver with the cold, and don't mind the creeping chills, rather than "be bundled up so."

We said something about a woman looking like a lady. We say lady, while we have in mind the idea of woman with the accessory notions of refinement and culture. Refinement or lack of it is observed more quickly in one's dress than by any other sign, unless it be one's manners. Most people, however, see clothes

before they do manners. One may be more lady-like, however, in a six-cent calico than another in a satin dress.

Expense is a matter of secondary importance in the art of dressing well. But how we have run on! PIPSEY POTTS.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING,

AS I LEARNED IT FROM MY HIRED GIRL.

"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness."—*Proverbs*.

I HAD a very good opinion of my housekeeping abilities until I tried to keep house.

I had been a teacher ten years. In my vacations I helped mother with a view to learning all I could about housekeeping, for, womanlike, I fondly hoped to some day have a house of my own to keep.

When Doctor R—— and I were married, I really thought he was getting quite a prize in the way of a housekeeper.

As our means were limited, I tried to get along with a young girl for help. After a few months' experience, I had a much more humble opinion of my abilities, and greatly increased respect for those who succeed in keeping house thoroughly.

I dismissed my cheap help, and went to the Doctor, saying, "Get me the best hired girl you can."

"All right," he said. "I know one who has been taught housekeeping from her youth up."

That same morning Hannah Smith, a neatly dressed American girl, was introduced into my disorderly kitchen. This was on Thursday. I determined to rest until Monday, and then begin in earnest to learn all that Hannah could teach me. It soon became evident that my new girl was complete mistress of her profession. I made an arrangement with her to the effect that I might follow her around and ask all the questions I chose.

I reasoned in this way. "A week constitutes one revolution of the household machinery. If I get the routine for one week firmly fixed in my mind I shall have a key to the whole year, for the year is simply made up of weeks."

I knew that there was one *right* way to do everything, and any number of wrong ways, but I believed that Hannah's way would be the *right* one.

Monday.—My girl came down-stairs early, looking clean and neat. She never would leave her room without having her shoes buttoned, her hair combed, and a collar on. She said she always put a couple of extra hair-pins in her hair on Monday to avoid looking frowsy, like most washerwomen do. Breakfast was served with as much care and order as usual. I observed, however, that the cooked dishes were such as could be quickly and easily prepared. Ceraline, which can be cooked in two minutes, beef steak cooked in a very hot skillet, fried potatoes, delicious coffee, brown bread, marmalade, and crullers. The milk for the coffee heated; cold milk will spoil the best coffee in the world.

After clearing the table, which she did by taking off the viands first, putting them on clean dishes, refilling the sugar bowl and salt cellars, then scraping the dirty dishes clean, and putting them in neat piles, she set them on a server and carried them to the kitchen sink. The tablecloth was brushed, then folded and placed under a weight; she then swept and dusted the dining-room, arranging the furniture and curtains neatly.

At last Hannah was ready to go to the kitchen. She then put on the wash water; while it was heating she washed the dishes and swept the kitchen and pantry.

The clothes were already sorted. Hannah had the week before made a big clothes-bag, with as many compartments as there were grades of clothes—fine white, coarse white, calicoes, woolens, and a pocket on the outside for collars and laces.

It did me good to see her work; she went about everything in such an orderly way. She washed the white clothes and hung them out, never wetting the colored clothes, nor getting them around in the way until she was ready to finish them right up.

I had always been in doubt about the amount of dry starch to use. I asked Hannah her rule.

"My rule is two teaspoonfuls of dry starch to each shirt, with bosom, collar, and cuffs. I also add one small teaspoonful of mucilage. It gives a fine gloss."

Hannah had gathered every dirty article she could find in the house. The result was a very large washing; but that

did not prevent her from getting us a good dinner and doing up the work neatly afterward. The colored clothes were not wet until after the dinner work was done. All were finished by three o'clock, and by bedtime every piece was folded in the basket, ready for the ironing next day.

Hannah prepared everything at night for breakfast, even to setting the table and getting the fire ready to light.

I always had such a time trying to whittle shavings with a dull case-knife that I asked Hannah how she managed.

"I never use shavings. I always use twisted paper."

"Why do you twist it?"

"So it will not burn up until the sticks above have caught fire. I like it as well as shavings, and it is so much easier to prepare. Paper is not good without twisting, for it burns out in a flash."

"How do you clear the coffee? The eggs seem to last wonderfully well."

"I never use eggs to clear coffee. I use only the shells. I wash the eggs before breaking them. After my Saturday's baking I have egg-shells enough to last a week for coffee."

"I think the shells clear it very nicely, and it is certainly a great saving."

Tuesday.—Hannah got the ironing done in the forenoon, and in the afternoon sat down in her clean, pleasant kitchen to mend the clothes that needed to be repaired. She asked me to put the clothes away.

"O dear!" I exclaimed; "the bureau drawers are in *such* a state."

"Well, we will take out and fold all the ironed clothes," said Hannah; "then we will turn all the odds and ends right into this big clothes-basket; you can sort them at your leisure. Then we will label each drawer, so not anything will get into it that does not belong in it. We will need one for 'Sheets and Pillow-cases,' one for 'Table Linen,' one for your 'Husband's Clothing,' and one for 'Madame's,' these little drawers for collars and handkerchiefs respectively. You write the labels, and I will be putting the clothes in piles."

I have had reason to be thankful every day of my life since I arranged my bureau Hannah's way.

"You need a stocking-bag," said Hannah; "one cannot keep things in place if there is no place to put them in."

"I think I keep my room looking very well," I said; "I pick up things every morning, and sometimes after dinner."

"Picking up is very well, but a much better thing to do would be to put everything at once where it belongs. It takes a little longer at the moment, but saves much time in the end. Think of the accidents that might happen in the kitchen if I could not put my hand on everything I need. If the steel fork which I use in cooking was out of place, the steak might burn to a cinder before I could find it, or if my holder was gone the pies or cake in the oven might be ruined. I dare not leave things out of place even one time, but a place must be made for things before one can put them in place."

"I believe that is true. I sometimes stand around in here with my hands full of various articles, not knowing what to do with them, and generally end by crowding them all into the top bureau drawer."

Hannah laughed, but returned to the question of order.

"You need in this room a shoe-box, a stocking-bag, a bag for soiled collars, a brush-box, a holder for matches, burnt and unburnt, a hair receiver, a hair-pin holder, and a hanging pin-cushion. I do not like to see even a pincushion lying around liable to be moved out of place. If it is hanging up you are always sure of finding it."

"Is that all?" I asked, in despair. "It would take me all summer to make so many articles."

"Oh! no; it is not necessary to have them covered with embroidery. It is very easy to have things convenient; but to have them very elaborate takes a great deal more time and trouble."

Hannah went to my dressing case and remarked, "You also need a bangle board, with little hooks screwed into it to hang your keys and button-hooks on."

When Hannah went out to get supper, I began sorting the basket of odds and ends. I found plenty of nice pieces to make all the conveniences she had suggested, and determined to make them as soon as possible.

Wednesday.—This was one of Hannah's baking days. She had the usual work all done by eight o'clock. She got everything ready before she began to bake,

even to a pan of hot water on the back of the stove to wash up baking dishes as fast as used. This was a new idea to me. My little Mary Jane and I used to get things in an awful clutter on baking days, and the washing of the dishes afterward was almost as much work as the baking.

I observed that Hannah did not get nearly so many dishes dirty. She first used a teacup to measure the sugar and flour, then the same cup for milk and butter. If she had not used it for the dry measures first she would have had to wash the cup or get another.

I never had known how to be exact in measuring a half teaspoonful of soda or cream of tartar until I saw how Hannah did. She first made it fine, then filled the spoon level full of soda, then with a knife divided it exactly in the middle *lengthwise* of the spoon.

It is said the French excel as cooks because they are so exact in measuring everything.

"If you wish, I will make some fried pies. I learned to make them in a city restaurant, and they were in great demand by those who once tried them," said Hannah.

"All right; I like anything new. How do you make them?"

"Take one quart of flour, one teaspoonful of salt, one of soda; lard or butter the size of an egg. Sift the soda with the flour—rub the lard into it. Beat one egg and two tablespoonfuls of sugar together. Stir into half a cup of sour milk, and pour into the other ingredients—knead all together. Roll out a piece of the dough to the size of a saucer, put on half of it some preserved fruit or dried apples stewed down quite dry with plenty of sugar, fold over the other half, press the edges together; fry in plenty of lard. While warm frost one side with a thin coating of water-icing."

After one trial of Hannah's fried pies they were almost invariably a part of our bill of fare, especially in the cooler months, when fried dishes are most in demand.

Hannah always washed the baking-pans as soon as the bread and pies were out of them. She said they washed so much easier and then were out of the way. Having finished the baking in the forenoon, Hannah gave her time to the pantry. She took out about a bushel basket full

of rubbish, such as bottles, boxes, bundles, etc. She scoured the shelves to exquisite cleanliness, and asked me to get white oil-cloth to put over them.

She said: "I could scour these shelves every week, but with the white oil-cloth it is but a moment's work to make all clean, and I think I could employ my time for you more profitably."

I was delighted with the appearance of the shelves in their snowy array, and after that one day, Hannah never spent one single hour in cleaning the pantry. She kept it clean every day.

At her suggestion I got oil-cloth for the kitchen floor; also new window shades: with the stove polished until it shone like a mirror, and a shelf covered with a red-cloth, and supporting its glittering row of lamps, my husband declared the kitchen the nicest room in the house.

Thursday.—There was plenty to do in emptying and arranging things in the store-room. Spices to be put into tight boxes, fat to try out, apples to sort, etc.; but my girl had it all in good order by three o'clock.

I went to the kitchen and found her sitting by the window with her big apron full of all sorts of cloth pieces.

"What are you doing, Hannah?"

She replied, "I found these in the closet under the stairway, and I am sorting them. All the spare time I can get from now until spring cleaning I shall put in this way. Nothing like being well ready."

"It is only March, and I never clean until the middle of May."

"I generally begin what I call my homeopathic housecleaning very early in the spring. That is, I clean thoroughly, a little at a time, whenever I have leisure from my regular work; by this means I get housecleaning done without disturbing the whole household."

Knowing how my husband hated housecleaning, I thoroughly approved of her homeopathic plan.

Whenever my girl was doing any work liable to soil her dress, she wore a large apron, cut like a loose princess, buttoned behind. It reached to the bottom of her dress, and had sleeves. I have adopted the same style of apron, and do not see how I got along without it. It is so easily slipped off. I am sure any housewife who wears one will rise in the estimation of her callers. She can appear so clean

and tidy at a moment's notice, and in a moment be ready for work again.

Friday.—Sweeping and dusting the whole house occupied only the forenoon. Then Hannah returned to sorting the things under the stairs. She did not pull everything out at once, but brought out what she could easily hold in her lap at once. Then, with a couple of baskets beside her, the work of sorting went quietly on. Many things were burned up—rags were saved, either for the rag man or for carpet, many of the latter going first into the clothes-bag to be washed.

Saturday.—Came the regular baking and cleaning for Sunday, but everything was so clean and in such good order that very little extra work was needed. Hannah did more baking and cooking than on Wednesday, and scrubbed the closet under the stairs, carefully choosing a time when my husband was away from home. It was her theory that men ought not to be made miserable for weeks at a time in the spring and fall by their wives mismanagement in housecleaning.

Sunday.—This was indeed a day of rest. Breakfast was the only cooked meal. We had cold meat for dinner, and a delicious luncheon at tea-time. Each meal had been so carefully planned the day before, and so well prepared, that even my husband, who is fond of good living, was satisfied.

In the seven preceding days one revolution of the household had been accomplished, and I was highly pleased with the result of having one day for each kind of work, and of doing that work thoroughly. I saw what my fault had been, trying to do a little of everything in one day, and doing no one task thoroughly.

I saw that work could be made hard or easy according to the way one managed it. I realized that nothing made work harder than getting behind with it. One day of idleness always doubles the next day's duties. It is the same with seasons. The woman who is late with her spring cleaning and sewing will be late with her fall cleaning and sewing. The work of May will drag along into July, and that of October into the holidays. Indeed, there are no holidays for the woman who is always behind with her work.

It has been said that the small daily task, if it be really daily, will beat the labors of a spasmodic Hercules; I had

been a spasmodic worker, but I determined, by the grace of God, to become a systematic worker, and for that purpose I deduced from Hannah's methods of housekeeping the following rules. I am certain that if I or any woman adhere to them closely, she will have mastered the art of GOOD HOUSEKEEPING:

Arise early.

Have a day for each kind of work.

Clean house homœopathically.

Never undertake more than can be finished in good order in one day.

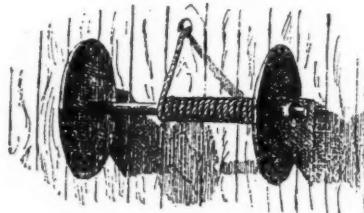
Never begin any extra work until the regular daily work is done.

Have no cleaning-up days, because things must be kept in order every day.

Prepare a place for everything, and put it back as soon as used.

MRS. DR. ROE.

CLOTHES-LINE REEL.



CLOTHES-LINES should be kept under cover when not in use; and the accompanying illustration shows a contrivance for this purpose which can be readily made and quickly put up. The best place for the reel and frame is in the scullery, wash-house, or second kitchen, and against the outer wall. A hole is cut out, through which the ropes can pass. To prevent any chafing of the rope, it is best to have it run over a small, grooved wheel. To keep the reel in its place, a small strap should be attached, bearing on the end of the spindle. This will also prevent the rope from running out faster than it is wanted. The frame should be made of oak or of stout pine; the spindle of inch-round oak, and the handle of oak also. The circular guards shown in the illustration can be made of half-inch oak, securely fastened to the spindle, and about ten to twelve inches in diameter. The whole affair had better be made of hard wood, as it is much more durable and can be made lighter than if made of pine.

NOTES FROM "HOME" HOUSEKEEPERS.

WELL-TRIED recipes, helpful suggestions, and plain, practical "talks" on subjects of special interest to housekeepers will be welcome for this department, which we have reason to believe that most of our readers will find interesting no less than useful. Our "HOME" friends will here have opportunities of assisting each other by giving timely and helpful replies and letters, and of asking information on any topic they wish light thrown upon. All communications designed for this department should be addressed to HOME MAGAZINE, P. O. Box 913, Philadelphia, Pa.

FROM "BRIDGET."

Though not much acquainted with "upper-crust" life,
I hope that each thrifty and careful housewife
Will think of me kindly for trying to show
Where I am at home, and what I do know.
My 'sphere' is the kitchen, and what I have tried

And proved to be good I'll tell you; beside
If any one knows of a way that is better,
Or can give us any good kitchen rules, let her;
I'll give up my chance and still be her debtor.
But here is something that really is nice:

FISH-BALLS.—If you want a good fish dinner with pork scraps or butter gravy, all right; but don't forget the fish-balls, as they will use up all that remains. Take good cod-fish, put it in cold water, and let it heat gradually till scalding hot. If necessary to freshen the fish, put in water of the same temperature as that you take out; do not let it boil, as that would harden the fish. Take two-thirds boiled potatoes to one-third fish, and mash both fish and potatoes while hot. If there are pork scraps or melted butter left, put them in. Take your potato-masher and work the whole thoroughly until the mass becomes adhesive; don't be afraid of working it too much. Dip your hands in cold water, and mold the hash into balls, then flour and shape them—they fry better if made quite flat. Have the fat hot, nearly enough to cover them, and fry to a rich brown. Serve hot, letting each season with mustard, sugar, pepper, or horse-

radish as they choose. Fish hash should be proportioned the same, and warmed in cream and butter.

And here is a recipe for a cake,
Cheap and simple, easy to make:

SPONGE CAKE.—Two eggs, two tablespoonfuls of butter, one cupful of sugar, one-half cupful of sweet milk, one teaspoonful of cream tartar, one-half teaspoonful of soda, spice with lemon or nutmeg, flour to make a not very stiff batter; bake quick.

WASHBURN, ME.

BRIDGET.

INQUIRY.

Will some sister kindly give a recipe for icing that will not crack off the cake when it is cut? By so doing she will greatly oblige Germantown.

X. Y. Z.

A FEW HINTS.

To keep a kitchen table clean, some pieces of oil-cloth and straw mats are handy to set sauce and stew pans on. They save the table from being soiled.

To stop bleeding, try a handful of flour bound on the cut. The inside of a "puff ball" is also good; and smoking the cut over an old woolen stocking, or other rag, thrown on hot coals, will act almost like magic in stopping the blood and taking out the pain and soreness. "HOME" mothers will often find occasion for trying this if their boys are all like mine.

For a cure for wasp or bee stings, apply a poultice of saleratus, water, and flour. Ammonia is also excellent.

For a burn, apply immediately common soda moistened with water. The effect will seem almost magical. Or, if blue clay can be readily obtained, mix a little of this to a paste with water, and spread over the burned place. A friend of mine always keeps a lump of this clay on hand for emergencies of this kind.

For bruises, try a cloth wrung out in hot water and laid on. Renew frequently until the pain ceases.

CRUMB CUSTARD PUDDING.—One pint of bread-crumbs soaked in one quart of milk for half an hour, or until soft; two eggs, save out the white of one for frosting; one teaspoonful of salt, three tablespoonfuls of sugar, nutmeg, and cinnamon for spice. Put in raisins or not as you like. Bake for an hour in a moderate oven. When done beat the white of the egg saved out with half a cupful of sugar, pour over the top, and let it stand for a few minutes longer in the oven. This is nice.

HOUSEKEEPER.

ABOUT RUGS.

We are going to making rugs at our house, and I would very much like to receive some hints concerning them from my sister housekeepers. I have a "tack" at rug-making once every year, at least, and sometimes twice, as I like to keep my rags used up snug; and it is easier, too, to make two or three rugs and call it play, than to wait until you have material enough on hand for half a dozen, and have to make real hard work of it. I use cotton rags as well as woolen ones for hooked rugs, though I do not use them together. As soon as a print dress, for instance, gets past wearing as a dress, I rip it up, wash and iron it, take the back breadths, if not too much worn, for kitchen aprons, and roll the remainder up snugly for my rug-rag box. When I am about ready to begin work, I color all such rags as need coloring, put in my rug up in the "shed-chamber," where it is out of the way, and really do not miss the time or feel the work it takes to make two or three, as the case may be, very pretty and serviceable rugs, though I have never tried any of the patented "rug machines," such as Chatty Brooks tells about in the last "*HOME*." I have heard say that these machines cut the burlap, and can only be used with just such rags, but I cannot say anything about it knowingly. Will not some sisters who have tried these machines throw further light on the subject by relating their experiences with them? Has any one ever tried the Griffith machine?

I will tell you how I made a rug last fall, which every one says is very pretty. For want of a better name I called it a "scarf rug." It is about fifty inches long

by twenty wide, and is made of cotton. The ends begin a dark brown, and keep shading lighter toward the centre, which is a real old-gold color. I colored almost the whole of it with one dye, dipping the darker shades more and coloring them first. Across the ends, after hemming, I sewed some "bullion" fringe, quite deep, which had been in use on a chair.

I hope a good many of the ladies will respond to my inquiry, as I think it one of general interest. Our "*HOME*" department will be the means of doing a great deal of good, and be very interesting if we all try to give our mites and do not hang back, thinking that somebody else will answer the questions which we are able to answer ourselves.

HAVERHILL.

A. M. C.

AN EMERGENCY DINNER.

We were deep in the mysteries of cleaning house one day this spring, Katy and I, and Aunt Dolly was setting the heel of her stocking in calm content and the coziest corner she could find. "John" was away for the day, there would be no real dinner to get, and everything promised fair for a good day's work.

"We'll almost finish down-stairs, all but the kitchen," I remarked, jubilantly, dipping my flannel wash-rag into the saucer of whiting as I spoke. (I always use whiting for cleaning paint. It is nice for windows, too; put it on a wet cloth and rub over the glass thoroughly; then, when nearly dry, rub it off again with a clean, dry cloth, and see if you are not agreeably surprised at the polish it gives.)

"That we will," said Katy, her pleasant Irish face one broad smile.

But alas for the frailty of human hopes! At that very instant I heard the gate-latch click, and glancing from the window I beheld—

"Uncle Daniel Folsom and his wife, from Waterville, as true as you live and breathe!" ejaculated Aunt Dolly, dropping a stitch in her knitting. "What do you s'pose brought 'em here to-day?"

"The cars, I expect," I answered, laughing in spite of myself; "and we're as glad to see 'em as can be, Aunt Dolly—if only we had something for them to eat. There is cold meat, but only a few scraps of various sorts, mostly ham. And there is a

dish of cold mashed potatoes left from yesterday's dinner. And there are eggs and half a loaf of raised bread and a few doughnuts, but not one thing for dessert, and it is already within half an hour of dinner-time. Dear me!"

I was talking more to myself than to Aunt Dolly or Katy. It was rather a discouraging inventory, wasn't it? but Aunt Dolly laughed and folded her knitting-work.

"Now don't you worry," said she; "I'll take charge of the dinner. You just invite Daniel and his wife in here and keep 'em comfortable, and go on with your work all you can." And out she whipped at one door just as Uncle Daniel, who isn't really "Uncle Daniel" to me more than you are, came in with his wife at another.

I made them heartily welcome, but I couldn't help having some secret misgivings as to how Aunt Dolly was succeeding with her self-imposed task. I need have had none, however. It did not seem over half an hour before she called us to a dinner fit for the queen—if that august personage is entitled to any better edibles than common people, which I doubt. She (Aunt Dolly, this time) had warmed the mashed potato, added a well-beaten egg or two and a little cream and butter, worked it over thoroughly, pressed it through the colander, letting it fall in dribelets in the nappy, and then set it in the oven to brown slightly, and there was the riced potato. She had chopped the bits of cold ham, etc., as fine as fine could be, warmed it in the spider with a little butter, made ready a plain omelet, turned half of it at a time in the frying-pan, well buttered, and when it was thoroughly set, spread it with half of the chopped meat, folded it over, and removed it to a hot platter to wait for the other half, and there was the ham omelet—two of them. Then there were the doughnuts and the bread, which *was* good, but the dessert—well, I wasn't disappointed; I had not really believed Aunt Dolly could manage anything of that sort.

But she had; and just before time for serving it she made a pretext for going to the kitchen. And in less than five minutes in came smiling Katy, with plates of pudding for four, smoking hot.

"Well, well," remarked Uncle Daniel,

with an appreciative smack, "this puddin' does go to the right spot, and no mistake. You'll hev to get the recipe for it, Staitry."

I looked at Aunt Dolly and Aunt Dolly looked at me. That pudding was nothing under the sun but wheat griddle-cakes piled, four of them, on each dessert plate, with nice pudding-sauce between them, and turned over the whole. But it *was* nice, just as Uncle Daniel said, and very quickly and easily prepared, which isn't saying the least.

And so our emergency dinner turned out well, after all. But I shudder to think of the doleful tale Uncle Daniel might have had to tell had it not been for Aunt Dolly.

PRISCILLA.

PITTSFIELD, ME.

POTATO YEAST.

DEAR "HOME":—I am such a "fanatic" that I decidedly object to the use of hops, even in yeast, and, with the permission of our editor, I will tell the sisters how I make my yeast without them. I came across the recipe some years ago, and since then have used no other; and I do not see but my bread is just as good as when I thought I must use hops in it. Peel and grate four good-sized potatoes. Into the raw, grated potato stir one-third of a cupful of salt and one-half cupful of white sugar. Pour over this mixture one quart of boiling water, stirring all the while. Set over a kettle of hot water, and let it cook about ten minutes; let cool till about milk warm, then add a cupful of lively yeast—less will do. Keep in a warm place, and your yeast will be all a-froth in three or four hours. Let it rise what it will, then bottle (I keep mine in glass cans, filling two about half full), and set away in a dark, cool place. I sometimes add to this recipe a little ginger, which makes the yeast keep better, but made without the ginger it will keep nice for two weeks or more.

Some time, perhaps next month, I will tell you how I make potato bread.

MASSACHUSETTS. ANN ELIZA.

A QUINTETTE OF QUERIES.

Will some of the ladies please tell me how to color cotton goods green, and greatly oblige

MRS. P.?

Can any one tell me how to prevent Turkey-red tablecloths and napkins from fading when washed? S. H. R.

I want to knit a Turkish cap for my little boy, four years old. Will some friend kindly give directions for the same through the "HOME" housekeepers' department?

MRS. SUE L. C.

PITTSBURG.

If any one will send a rule for an old-fashioned Indian pudding, also for preparing and baking beans in the New England way, it will be a great favor to

ST. PAUL, MINN. MINNEHAHA.

Will some kind sister please send in directions for the care of canaries during the breeding season, particularly? also for the care of the young birds? and oblige

MAGGIE M. L.

DEAR HOME:—Your ever-welcome MAGAZINE has made us monthly visits for over four years, and without it there would indeed be felt a good influence lost, as there are so many words of cheer, comfort, and stimulus to live the *ideal* life, or at least attempt it. The object of my writing now is to answer Mrs. A. M. G.'s request of a "well-tried recipe for angel cake," and this has been well tried without failure: The whites of eleven eggs, beaten stiff; sugar, one and one-half cupsfuls; flour, one cup sifted five times, in which has been stirred one teaspoonful of cream of tartar; flavor to suit the taste. Now judgment must be used as to the size of eggs and cups, the quality of sugar, etc. If eggs are very large use only ten, or large cups for measuring the flour and sugar; if granulated sugar is used, put in less than of the pulverized or "A" sugar.

MRS. W. B. THOMPSON.

(From Mrs. J. F. M., Hickory, N. C.)

DEAR "HOME":—I have tried the recipe for the "Hot Cross Buns" in the June number of your MAGAZINE. They are very nice, but I think a little more butter and sugar would be an improvement.

I send my recipe for "ribbon-cake," as requested by Mrs. G. A. Dixon. This is the best I have ever tried: One cup butter, two and one-half cups sugar, four

eggs, one cup sour milk, five cups flour, into which a small teaspoon of soda has been sifted. Fill two shallow pans with half the batter, and to the remainder add one cup each of raisins, currants, and citron, and one teaspoon each of cinnamon, cloves, allspice, and nutmeg. Bake in two pans and put together, a light and a dark cake, alternately with boiled frosting.

MRS. I. T. MURRILL.

"Bad digestion" I think Sister Mary will find the real trouble. I used to have a fit of the blues every time after eating baked beans, but now I can eat them without any bad results, for in addition to the teaspoonful of soda, salt, and molasses, I put in one teaspoonful each of ginger and mustard. Soak over night, and cook nearly all day; be sure and keep them filled up with water until nearly done.

Mrs. Maria W. wants to know how to make soup-stock. The way I have always done is to boil all my bones and fragments of meat, cook them before they take any hurt, salt while cooking. Strain the liquor and when cool skim off every mite of the fat, and do not use the settings. Some kinds will jelly better than others. If you want it to jelly cook longer. The lean parts of the meat can be used for a hash with potatoes, or chopped meat on toast, and the dog can have the bones.

Mrs. G. A. Dixon wants an ice-cream recipe, not too expensive. I do not know of any good ice-cream recipe unless it is expensive. When I see the faces people make up while trying to swallow cheap ice-cream, I think to myself if I cannot have good ice-cream I will not have any. I send a recipe, the best that I know of. You understand the freezing part, of course, so will not mention that. Ice-cream: One quart of milk, five eggs, one cup of cream, two cups of sugar. Put the milk in a pail to boil, beat sugar and yolks of eggs to light froth. Stir into milk. Beat the whites of eggs to stiff froth. Stir in the cream, cold, then flavoring, any kind you please. Stir the mixture until cool before putting into the freezer. This is the pure, genuine article.

MISS PHEBE M. SMITH.
GAYSVILLE, VERMONT.

(Answer to Sister Mary's request for a remedy for fits of depression :)

DEAR SISTER MARY:—You say there is no just cause for such depression of spirits. Then there is no reason why you cannot overcome them. If, when you feel them coming on you will do some kind action, as a word of kindness to a

sorrowful one, a helping hand to a weary one, or alms to the poor, whatever it be, if done in the name and for the sake of our dear Lord you will find you feel too happy to think of depression. Try this, and should you find it of use to you, I should be glad to hear through our friend the HOME MAGAZINE.

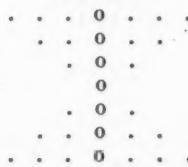
Yours, SISTER ELLA.

"HOME" PUZZLES.

ALL communications relative to this page should be addressed to the "Puzzle Editor HOME MAGAZINE," Box 913, PHILADELPHIA, PENNA.

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 41.

HOUR-GLASS.



Across: 1. A large ship, formerly used. 2. A collection. 3. A unit. 4. A consonant. 5. An insect. 6. A devotional song. 7. To regulate by musical measure.

Centrals, read downward: A formal proof. " BROWNIE."

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 42.

BROKEN WORDS.

1. Break a monkey into to fortify and a simpleton.
 2. Break scandal, and make a kind of cloth and a fresh-water fish.
 3. An instrument for exhibiting colors, and make a plant and an ancient tribute.
 4. To stigmatize, and make a haunt and a weight.
 5. A cooling wind, and make a member and a preposition.
 6. A dish of food composed of many kinds of fish, and make an equal and a large tree.
- M. A. D.

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 43.

DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

My first is in journal, but not in book; My second in butler, but not in cook;

My third is in trumpet, but not in gong; My fourth is in music, but not in song; My fifth is in rascal, but not in rogue; My sixth is in fashion, but not in vogue; My seventh is in shallot, but not in yacht; My eighth is in kettle, but not in pot; My ninth is in scramble, but not in run; Also in musket, but not in gun; Now, in the first column, two words please find,

Which form the name of a plant, combined. " PETER PIPER."

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 44.

WORD-SQUARE.

1. A certain fish found in the East Indies.
2. A tree and its fruit.
3. Increases.
4. To turn outward.
5. Easily irritated.

DAISY DEANE.

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 45.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

My 4, 5, 6, 3, is a part of you.
My 10, 8, 2, 7, is deficient in good qualities.

My 1, 9, is a personal pronoun.
My whole is a lofty tree of the West Indies. " A. NEMO."

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 46.

LETTER REBUS.

ST M

T H

EMMA F. DIXON.

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 47.**CHARADE.**

Many a primal fair we have,
Of a final, far away;
But only in total oft we see,
The sunny shores where we long to be,
The shore where 'tis always May.
"PHUNNY PHELOW."

"HOME" PUZZLE NO. 48.**A MENAGERIE.**

1. A pointed projection and a musical instrument.
2. An insect and to run away.
3. A river and a pronoun.
4. A vassal and to flow gently.
5. A covering and an interjection.

"MERRY MACK."**SOLVERS.**

April "Home" Puzzles were solved as follows:

Complete lists: Carrie R. Tucker, Sara, "Brownie."

Partial answers: Miss M. Emily Mills, three; Mrs. B. F. Murdock, Jr., one; "Mollie Darling," five; Mary A. Patterson, one; Clara R. Maxwell, two; Ella J. Fulgham, three; "Fan C." four; Eva M. Doughty, two; Sarah Lees, three; "Rose Mary," six; M. A. D., two; C. L. Faulkner, two; G. W. Richardson, one; Emma F. Dixon, four; "Evening Star," three; Lucy J. Chase, five; Miss Orra Smith, two; Marjorie, three.

PRIZE WINNERS.

First complete list.—Miss Carrie R. Tucker, Mohawk, Herkimer Co., N. Y.
Specials.—G. W. Richardson, East Haverhill, N. H.; Miss M. Emily Mills, Brookton, Tompkins Co., N. Y.; C. L. Faulkner, Prospect, Wis.; Lucy J. Chase, Middlefield Centre, N. Y.; Mary A. Patterson, Algona, Iowa; Eva M. Doughty, Centreville, Ind.; Clara R. Maxwell, Lytle, Warren Co., O.; Miss Orra Smith, Ghent, Ky.; Ella J. Fulgham, Mason City, Iowa.

TO OUR PUZZLERS.

For the best list, first received, we offer a large and very handsome oleograph,

twenty-one by twenty-eight inches. For the second best, a pretty scrap-book.

CHIT-CHAT.

Sara.—That missing "n" was doubtless a typographical error. Thanks for your appreciative words.

"Mollie Darling."—Certainly, you can use a *nom-de-plume*, and any one you choose, so long as you do not choose one already appropriated by some other of the great army of puzzlers. It is well to give your real name, however, privately, and not for publication unless you wish.

E. F. D.—We are always glad to have puzzles sent in for the "Home" puzzle department. Your "diamond" is not quite up to the mark, but we have used the "letter rebus," as you see.

"Evening Star."—Yes, all readers of the "HOME" are invited to send answers and original puzzles for publication. We are glad you enjoy the department, and hope to hear from you regularly.

"Brownie."—Thanks. We always like to receive acknowledgments of prizes, which are always sent promptly on or before the first of each month—as soon as the list closes, in fact.

ANSWERS TO MAY "HOME" PUZZLES.**No. 27.**

P-el-F
A-ri-L
Sol-O
S-ee-R
I-de-A

No. 28.

Z I B E T
I N A N E
B A T T A
E N T E R
T E A R S

No. 29.

C H A R M
O D E O N
A A R O N
D A R I C
L A B O R

No. 30.—1. Ousel-louse. 2. Flea-leaf. 3. Spine-snipe. 4. Stork-torsk. 5. Trout-tutor.

No. 31.—Terin.

No. 32.—lo(A)ch; pe(N)al; me(D)al; dr(E)am; fa(R)ee; ha(S)te; sp(E)ar; mi(N)ce—ANDERSEN.

No. 33.—1. Pentameters. 2. Stereopticon. 3. Serpentinely. 4. Presidential. 5. Transparently. 6. Dispensative.

HOME DECORATION AND FANCY NEEDLEWORK.

A MONDAY FRIEND.

RECEPTACLE FOR SOILED LINEN.

"Breathes there a (wo)mán with soul so dead,
Who never to herself hath said"—

"I DO wish I had something to keep my soiled handkerchiefs, collars, and aprons in—something fit to be seen, that I could have in my bed-room; how many steps it would save! As for going away out to the wash-room just for one or two little things a dozen times a week, I am tired of it! And that isn't the worst of it either. If I don't go they are sure to be put just where they can't be found when wanted, and then stare out from drawers and closets, happy and dirty, after the washing is done and no one wants to see them."

How many times, when I have heard the tired voices of the dear ones, whose loving care has so long blessed me, and filled my sick-room with comfort, expressing some such wish, I have said to myself, "If I am ever able to sew again they shall have something, and it shall be pretty and convenient too," but I hardly knew how, or of what, I should make it.

As weary months of pain came and went, it might have passed entirely from my mind, had I not heard a friend read, among other items in a paper, "bags for soiled linen are often made of bordered towels."

Often after that my old resolution to make something of the kind, that should be pretty as well as useful, would recur to me; and often when alone—sometimes in the long hours of the slowly dragging night—I would find amusement and momentary forgetfulness of self in thinking how they might be made; and oh! the countless number of beautiful things I made in imagination!

I could never describe half of them, or tell of the wonderful lines, mottoes, and couplets I composed to decorate them with, or the variety of materials and stitches I used; for if I should, I suppose that even this publication itself could not contain all the tales that would be written. You

may be sure that many of them faded from memory when daylight came, leaving only a tantalizing sense of the loss of a pleasant idea.

I know one—the most extravagant—was made of satin and plush, decorated top and bottom by falling tabs tipped with balls of plush mingled with gold, and by a couplet and initials worked with gold thread with golden sprays twining about them, and hung by satin ribbons tipped with balls. That was not for me to make—in the daytime—but perhaps this suggestion may meet the eyes of one who *can*, and would like to make a similar one; if so, she may consider it sent especially to her, and take for its inscription, if she has nothing better, the following:

"Like seeds sown deep in darkness,
We'll blossom pure and sweet."

If something shorter is desired, how would this do?

"Every-day seeds for Monday blossoms."

Another was made of smooth, glossy satineen, with silk embroidery and velvet trimming; some bore painted mottoes and wild flowers, others verses and etchings in indelible ink, and still others were of fringed linen with Kensington work.

On one was embroidered in large, flowing letters:

"A friend in need.
A Monday friend is a friend indeed,
And a friend indeed
Is a friend in
Need."

But when again in my sick-room I heard the exclamation—as a soiled towel and napkin were hurriedly dropped—"There! I believe I never shall have a bag to keep such things in! I do wish I had one—yes, two of them;" I thought it time to be planning one which could be easily and quickly made, and seeing a fringed towel near, began folding and measuring it, thinking of the item I had heard so long before, and soon had the details of a very pretty, practical, every-day affair arranged in my mind.

My next care was to note down the directions for future use, and when, some time after, I had the pleasure of testing them, I found them just right; and the bag was so very useful, and has made itself so necessary to our comfort, that I think there may be others who would gladly make one for themselves, or for a gift for some busy friend, if they could go directly to work upon it without the trouble of planning; so, wishing you all success, I give the directions by which mine was made:

Materials—a handsome linen towel—gray, ecru, or white—with colored border and knotted fringe, thirty-three by twenty inches; a piece of plain linen or muslin twenty-two by twenty inches, of a shade to match for back side (or another towel if you prefer); strip of flat elastic thirteen inches long; a narrow flat stick twelve inches long with a small hole near each end; a ball of linen cord, or darning cotton, as nearly like the towel fringe as possible; a little embroidery cotton to match the colored border, which should be red or indigo blue for common use, as they bear washing better than other colors. Fold over eleven inches of the towel at the top, put a row of stitching across two inches from the upper edge, and another an inch below that; this makes a place for elastic. The clear space between the upper fringe and the lower border may be decorated by an inscription—anything to give it personality, or a character of its own. I intended putting

"We'll 'bide a wee' with patience,
For we'll flourish by and by."

on mine, or "A Monday Friend," but as I couldn't wait to make large fancy letters, or to stamp it, but wished to write the lines directly on the towel with a pencil in my own handwriting, large and bold, I wanted something that would occupy more space, so decided to have the following:

"Yes, we're here—and we'll stay—safely hid
hidden away
Till Monday morning early;
Then
We'll dance on the line, in the bright sun-
shine,
And come in all pure and pearly."

It fitted the place nicely, leaving only

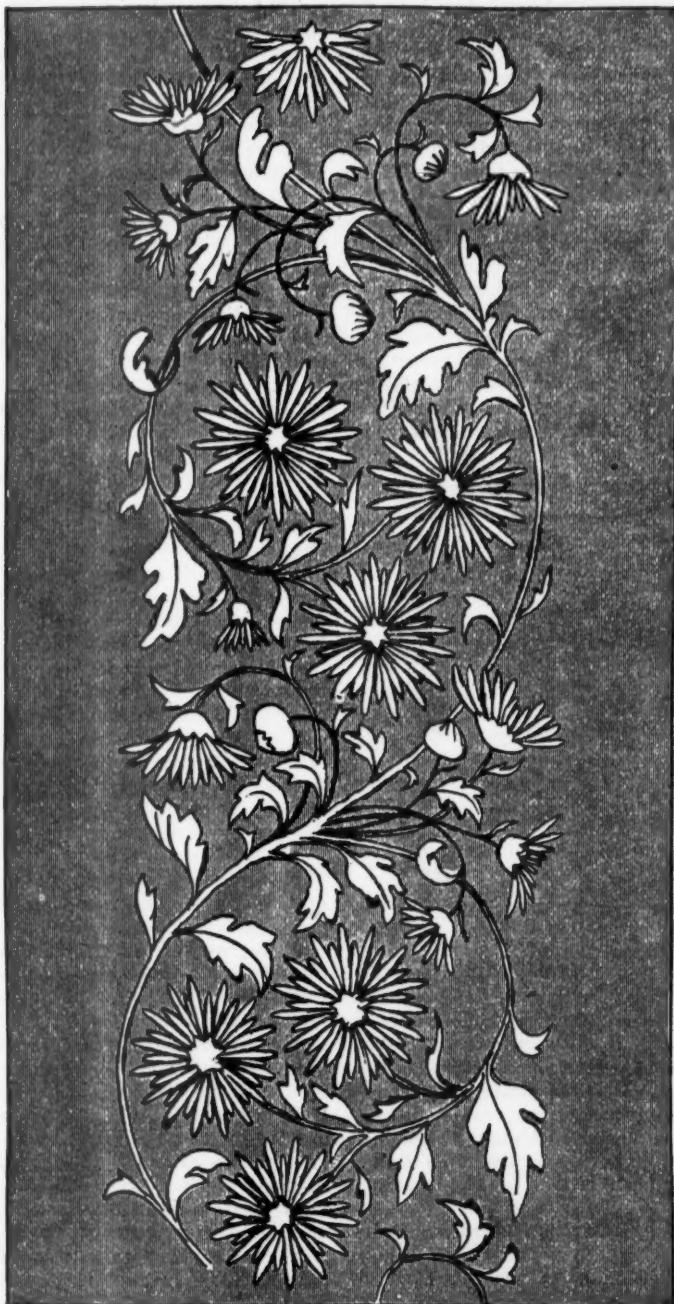
a narrow margin, which was just what I desired.

Turn in all the edges of plain piece just enough for a seam, fold over three inches for hem at one end, stitch it down, and stitch it again an inch above hem. Lay this on the back of towel with the upper edges just even; stitch the sides and lower edge together, omitting the ends of space for elastic. Put another row of stitching an inch above the one at the bottom, run tape or any stout strip of cloth twelve inches long, or shorter if you choose, in this space, and fasten the ends securely. Put elastic in upper space, and the stick in the one at the back, and fasten it half an inch from each end by a few strong stitches through the holes; it prevents the bag from drawing out of shape when suspended. Crochet or twist a large heavy cord one yard and three-fourths long, cut it in two, tip one end of each piece with a heavy tassel, fasten the other ends inside the mouth of bag at ends of stick, and tie the cords together sixteen inches from bag, making careless, drooping loops and ends. If a row of colored feather-stitch is added to the edge of standing ruffle, inside and out, also to the upper shirr, and a little of the color mixed into the cord and tassels, it is quite an improvement. A six-inch patch-pocket added to the inside of back piece is nice to hold fine laces, ties, or anything too frail to bear careless handling. If a larger bag is required, prepare two towels as directed, one for each side, and let the plain cloth—without standing ruffle—be between them, thus doubling its capacity.

When finished, suspend it near dressing-case or commode, *use it*—then see if it is not a *comfort* when Monday morning arrives.

Don't forget to give it a place in your trunk when you go to the beach or the mountains this summer. You will find it as indispensable there as at home; and when some dear friend admires it, and says: "Oh! isn't it nice? How I wish I had one!" you will know just what to make for her Christmas gift, if you agree with me in thinking a useful present—one that would soon make its loss felt—so much more acceptable than useless ornaments.

FRANCES H. P.



DESIGN FOR MANTEL BORDER.
EMBROIDERED IN SILK OR CREWEL.

A GENTLEMAN'S white tie case is a gift that will often be welcome, and that is more useful than the usual presents made by ladies to the opposite sex. The breadth of the case is from four to four and a half inches, the length that of a necktie doubled. The case should open like a letter case, but the lower flap is lined with mill-board to make it stiff, and so keep the ties from crushing. Plush and satin are required, the former being made the outer cover, and the latter, after being slightly quilted, and the owner's monogram worked in silks in one corner, is made up as the lining. Narrow elastic bands are sewn inside the lining, and keep the cravats in place, and a broad, but not hard elastic, finished with button and fastener, is stitched on outside the case, and keeps it together.



COVER FOR LOOSE PHOTOGRAPHS.—A pretty idea for holding a few dozen photographs is seen here made of an old book cover. It is covered on the outside with terra-cotta-colored plush, and on the in with satin the same shade. The edges of each are turned in and overhanded together. A photograph is tied on the outside with tiny ribbons the same shade. Broader ribbon is used to tie it together.

SMALL Japanese hand-screens may be covered with satin, nun's veiling, or any other soft material. A pocket is fastened to the front, upon which a spray of flowers, a bird, or an insect should be

painted or embroidered. Strings to suspend the screen must be fastened to the handle, and a loose white paper lining may be slipped into the pocket, which will then serve the purpose of a toilet tidy. Larger screens may be trimmed for wall-pockets; the smaller ones may also be used as watch-pockets if a proper hook is fastened on to the bow, which should decorate the handle. Bags are a great convenience, especially where there is a lack of closet room, and may be used for different purposes. A tablecloth bag is handy to hang on the door of a dining-room pantry, and can be made of a piece of linen eighteen inches square, lining it with ticking to make it strong, then a piece fourteen by twenty-two inches; place the long side against the bottom part of the first piece or foundation, gathering in fullness as you baste. The top should be previously stitched on the edge, half an inch in, and worked in feather-stitch; this should be five or six inches short of the top of the foundation. Then take a piece eighteen inches wide and ten inches deep, stitching and working the same as the bag part, one long edge and two sides. Place this at the top of the foundation, letting it come down over the second part like a flap or cover, then stitch and work the top with a double stitching and feather-stitch up the centre of the bag to the top of the second piece, thus forming two deep pockets, with a flap or envelope to cover the openings. This flap can be worked in any pretty pattern.

HANDKERCHIEF SACHETS are made quite square and smaller than the night-gown sachets. A quarter of a yard is a fair size; a piece of cardboard, to make them stiff, is inserted into the lining, also some powdered scent, well dusted on to the cotton wool. The flaps of these sachets are made of plush or satin, embroidered with gold thread, and the quilting is carried only an inch beyond the bag part. Instead of the gimp edging and the lining turned back, coffee-colored lace, put on very full, is sometimes substituted; but if the owner lives in a large town, the lace soon looks smoky and poor, and the gimp, etc., will wear twice as long. A variety of these quilted handkerchief-cases is the following: Make the foundation as before described, with the quilted satin, and as a square. Take a piece of

satin or velveteen one inch smaller than the square and cut it as a semicircle. Embroider this semicircle; line it with cotton wool, but do not quilt it. Line the back with a bright and contrasting shade of color to the one used on the quilting, and then attach this semicircle to the square, making it lie flat, and leaving an opening for the handkerchiefs to be inserted where the bottom of the semicircle comes. A fine silk cord is sewn round the parts where the embroidered upper piece is fastened to the foundation square.

A SAILOR's cap made of blue serge with a blue silk bag fastened inside, is attractive. The band round the cap should have a name painted on it in gold letters. Scotch caps may be made in the same way

upon a foundation of cardboard. These, instead of being used for sweets, should be filled with folds of black cloth notched at the edges, and serve for penwipers. Work-baskets and bags may be made in great variety. The African hats and baskets of foreign manufacture, are now fashionable, lined in harlequin style. Four or five colors of satin are joined together in widths of about two or three inches, until the required length is obtained. If piece satin is employed, double seams must be made; but some of the cheap broad satin ribbons now sold might be used, and these would only require one seam. Draw the bags up with narrow ribbons to match the colors of the satin, and finish off with bunches of the narrow ribbons fastened here and there on the basket.

FASHION NOTES.

THOUGH there is much in the making of a dress, and although it is always easy to see when it is fashioned by an experienced hand, still, with the present variety in material and colors, it is almost impossible for every one not to succeed in producing something novel and effective. As striped silk and woolen goods have plain fabrics to match them, there is no longer any difficulty in the combination of shades. For instance, a light-blue surah, with broad stripes in pale gold and beige, can be successfully used with at least ten other materials, either matching the blue of the ground, the gold, or the beige. A costume of this kind may have a striped skirt and a tunique of beige crêpe de chine. The latter forms a polonoise, or else it is draped in a second skirt, with the separate waist either pointed or having a belt. The striped surah vest is crossed over a fichu of light blue crêpe lisse. The same style is seen with a beige ground and Scotch plaid stripes, and with an old pink ground with moss green stripes dotted with red. In suits of this kind the underskirt is striped and the tunique and waist are plain with trimmings and ornaments in the style of the skirt. Suits are also seen with skirts and tuniques of plain goods, in which case

there are brightly colored panels, quilles of lace, long narrow trimmings of bows, crossed cordings, and many other styles. Bows in ribbons of many colors and in swallow-tail shape, which have been used for some time past on bonnets, now serve for costumes. They form plastrons and quilles. Among the fancy striped materials are foulards, surahs, corahs, bengalines, siciliennes, and crêpe de chine. The last named fabric is very suitable for soft draperies fastened up by cordings. Etamine and grenadine are much used, the latter having regained all its former prestige.

Woolen costumes are trimmed with wide and with narrow galloons. There are many kinds of galloons, a favorite style being a combination of light woolen tissue and gold, silver, bronze, or steel metal. Steel is more favored than other metals. There are also mohair and velvet galloons, which are either plain or worked with silk, worsted, or beads. This trimming is arranged on the lower part of the skirts in wheel-shaped designs, or it forms rows one above the other. Narrow galloon serves for trimming waists, guimpes, or vests, and the yokes of blouses. These galloons also form lengthwise panels down the sides of skirts, when the overdress or

polonaise opens to show this trimming. Many polonaises are worn over skirts made in this manner. Sometimes the skirt is plain and the polonaise has designs, checks, etc. Waists in blouse style are plaited or gathered. They produce the effect of being loose, but they are made over tight-fitting linings.

Cloth jackets are worked with bright-colored beads in arabesque designs. They have also braiding in the color of the cloth. Among the trimmings for jackets are passementeries, brandebourgs, tags, flaps, epaulets, and cordings, with ends of chased silver or of any other metal. Suits of fancy foulard in bright colors, combined with plain foulard in one shade, are very becoming when employed with jackets. The beauty of these suits consists in the vests, which should be in a plain light color. The vests are usually of cloth with embroidered collars of the same material or of plain velvet, and they have fancy buttons. Vests worn under plain cloth jackets are in poppy red, white, and gray, embroidered with thread of rather coarse steel, which has the effect of fine braiding. There are many shapes for jackets, but the three which will be most worn are as follows: The first is slightly crossed in the neck, where there is a single button, and it opens all the way down the front to show the vest. The second model falls straight without darts, turns back in revers lined with silk, and closes on the side by means of large buttons. The third style has no darts, and has a deep turned-down collar, very open in front over a silk waist. This waist may have a lace chemisette. A broad belt in front has a large buckle of old silver. All these jackets are tight fitting in the back.

Materials with checks in all sizes serve for morning, walking, and traveling suits. Checked woolen goods in neutral tints are employed for the whole dress, which consists of a waist, a draped tunique, and a skirt. If the wearer has a slight figure the material is used straight; if the figure is rather stout the goods should be bias, and for very large persons it is best not to employ checked fabrics. Some suits are of plain materials, with the vest, collar, cuffs, and part of the lining of the drapery of checked goods. This drapery is plaited, thus showing the lining. Checks are always bias for these trimmings. Checked mate-

rials will also serve for more dressy occasions when they are of soft, fine fabrics. Contrasts in bright colors are preferred for this purpose, such as blue and red, "capucine" and brown, pearl gray and steel, light and dark heliotrope. The suits are embroidered in one of the two colors, the color of the work contrasting with the ground, as, for instance, capucine embroidery on a brown ground, and brown work on a capucine ground. Woolen foulards with fine dots, having borders with large dots, make useful dresses for ordinary wear. These dresses generally have gathered waists with or without yokes, and belts with buckles. The sleeves are gathered or plaited around the armsize, and are drawn in on the wrist under the cuff. The skirt falls full and loose. The border is on the lower part of the dress. The tunique is very simply draped. Among the materials for tailor suits are those with tiny checks or fine stripes. These suits consist of a skirt either plaited all round or in the back only, a slightly draped tunique, and a jacket waist. The only trimming for these suits is from three to five rows of silk stitching around the border of the skirt, tunique, and jacket. These simple dresses are completed by a large pelerine or a small mantle with sleeves turning over. They are of light cloth or cheviot in the color of the dress.

There are three kinds of trimming in vogue this season. Ribbon and lace serve for foulards, which should only have light trimmings, particularly if they have designs. Woolen toilets bear the worsted and velvet galloons already described, or bands of striped goods. Dresses of painted linen or of Alsatian satin have trimmings of coarse brownish lace and ecru draperies, or draperies of other colors in materials that do not fade when washed.

The three styles of sunshade most used for carriage and dressy purposes are of black shirred Venetian tulle trimmed with jet galloon of red crape or bengaline, and of cream-colored lace, tulle, or embroidered crape. For country use there will be sunshades of striped linen, or silk foulard, with all kinds of peculiar designs.

Long earrings are again to be the style. Earrings of diamonds, lapis lazuli, coral, and gold are already worn by Parisian ladies.

CLIPPINGS.

THROWING THE OLD SLIPPER.—Throwing an old slipper after a bride and bridegroom when starting on their honeymoon is supposed to have taken its origin from a Jewish custom, and signifies the obedience of the wife as well as the supremacy of the husband. A shoe is thrown for luck on other occasions besides a marriage. Ben Jonson says:

"Hurl after me an old shoe,
I'll be merry, whatever I do."

It is related that many years ago, when lotteries were permitted, the custom of throwing a shoe taken from the left foot after persons was practiced for good luck. This custom has existed in Norfolk and other counties from time immemorial, not only at weddings, but on all occasions where good luck is required. A cattle dealer required his wife to "trull her left shoe after him" when he started for Norwich to purchase a lottery ticket. As he drove off on his errand he looked round to see if his wife had performed the charm, and received the shoe in his face with such force as to black his eyes. He went and bought his ticket, which turned up a prize of six hundred pounds, and he always attributed his luck to the extra dose of shoe which he got. The custom as it originally existed is dying out, for, whereas our forefathers threw old shoes after the wedding equipage, we, in this more luxurious age, purchase new white satin slippers for the purpose. The origin of this custom may be traced from the words in Psalm cviii, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe," meaning thereby that success should attend the methods used to subdue the Edomites. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the superstitious custom has arisen from this construction of these words.—*All the Year Round.*

YOUNG MEN AND SINGLE LIFE.—It is undoubtedly true that a single life is not without its advantages for some. There are hundreds of young men, as there are a like number of young women, to whom a married life would be unsuitable and unwise. It is an inexcusable sin for any young man of hereditary ill-health or deformity to assume marriage, and to such a one single life has advantages, even

though it holds out few pleasures. But that young man who is possessed with every bodily and mental equipment, and marries not, fails in one of the most palpable duties of life. He deprives himself of life's most refined and exalted pleasures, of some of its strongest incentives to virtue and activity, and sets an example unworthy of imitation. Nothing has, or should have, a greater refining and moralizing influence to a young man than marriage. If he remains unmarried, he lays himself open to alluring vices that have no place in his eye or mind when his attentions and affections are centered upon a devoted wife. Marriage changes the current of a man's feeling, and gives him a centre for his thoughts, his affections, and his acts. It renders him more virtuous, more wise, and is an incentive to put forth his best exertions to attain position in commercial and social circles. It is conceded that marriage will increase the cares of a young man, which he would not encounter if he remained single, but it must be granted, on the other hand, that it heightens the pleasures of life. If marriage, in some instances within our knowledge, has seemed to be but a hindrance to certain success, the countless instances must not be forgotten where it has proved to be the incentive which has called forth the best part of man's nature, roused him from selfish apathy, and inspired in him those generous principles and high resolves which have helped to develop him into a character known, loved, and honored by all within the sphere of its influence. Matrimony, it is true, is chargeable with numberless solicitudes and responsibilities, and this all young men should fully understand before entering upon it; but it is also full of joy and happiness that is unknown to the bachelor.—*Brooklyn Magazine.*

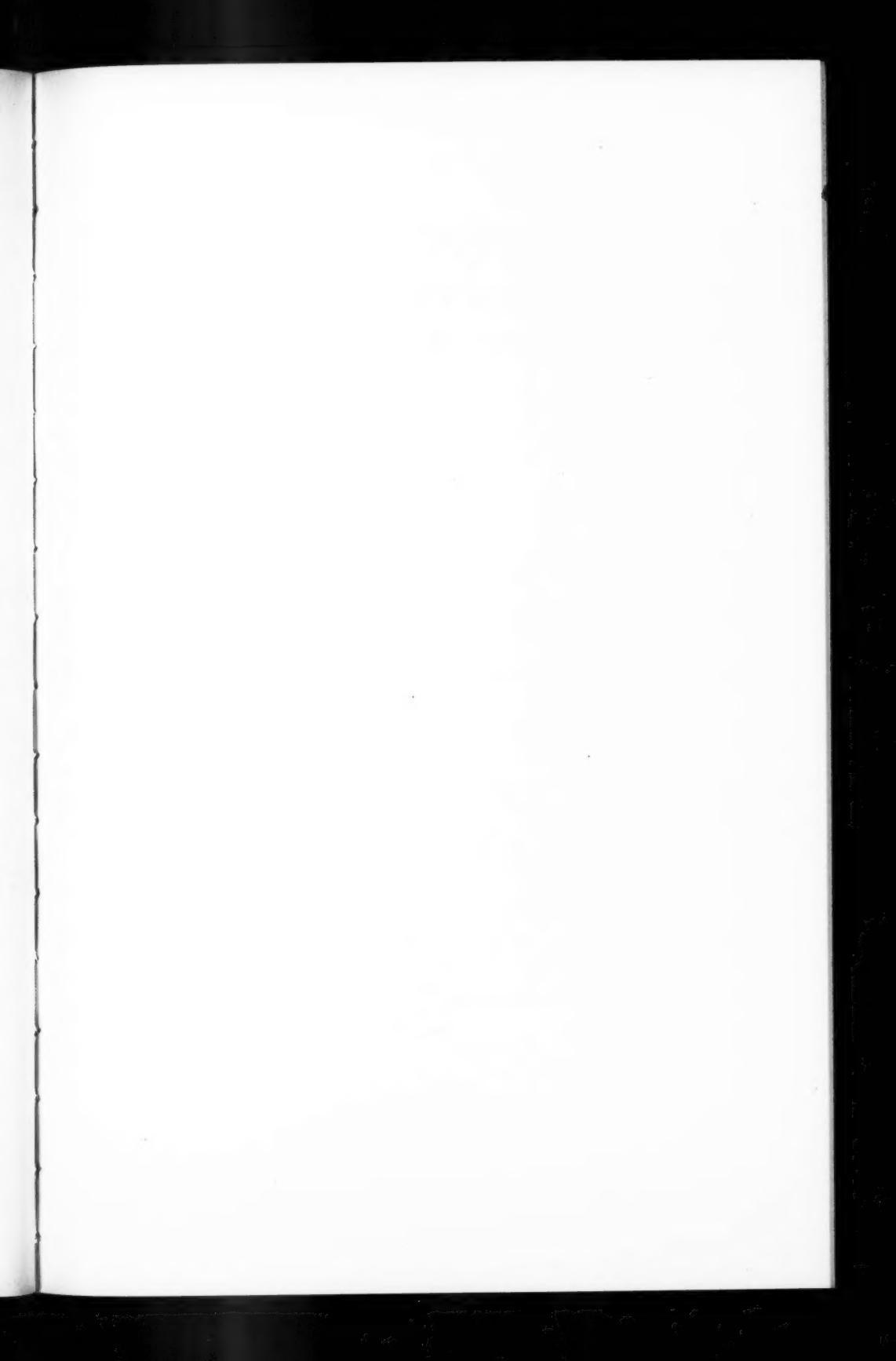
PUBLISHING THE BANS.—I have heard from a brother clergyman an incident, the truth of which internal evidence may be said to guarantee, inasmuch as it seems beyond the power of invention. The good old minister of whom it was told always used to have the book containing the bans put on the reading desk just at his right hand. One Sunday morning he began as

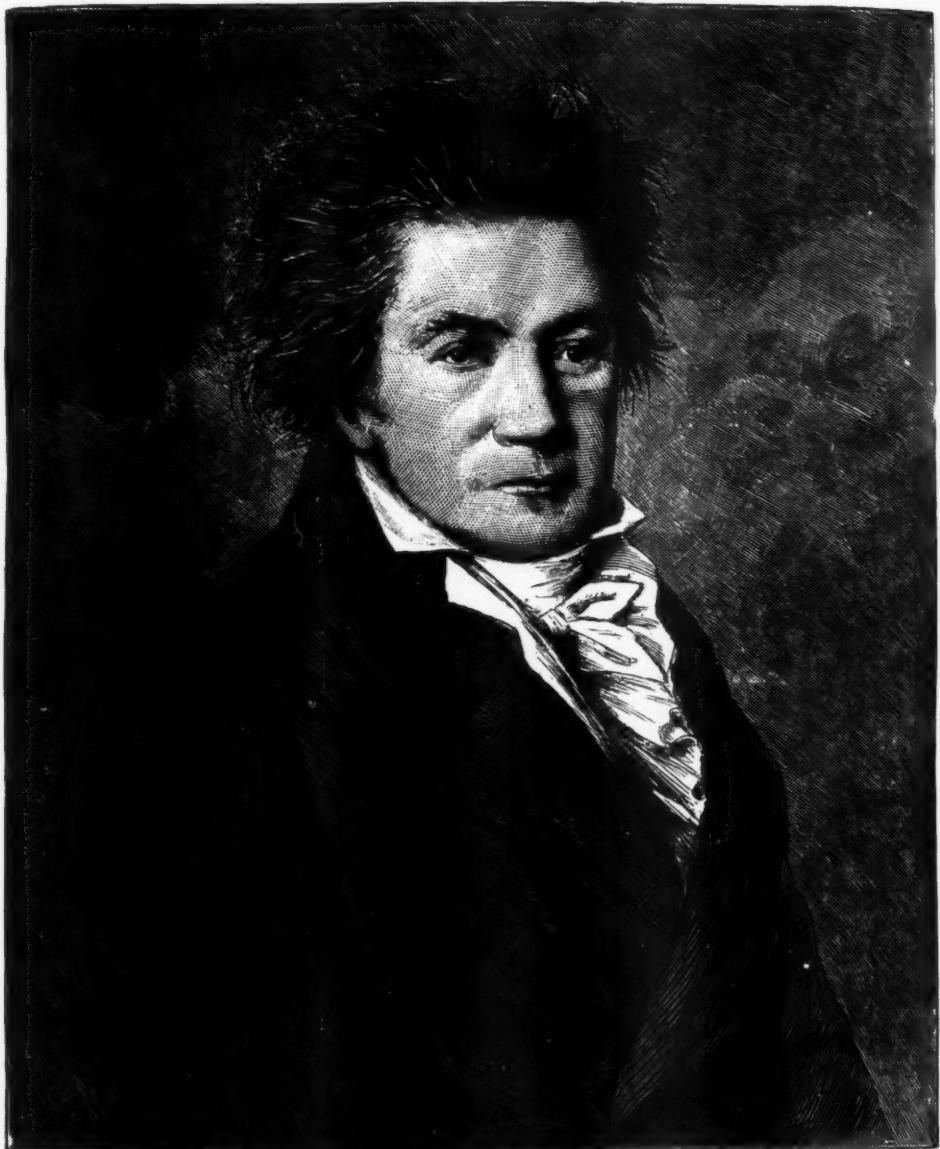
usual, "I publish the bans of marriage between—," and, putting down his hand in all confidence for the book, found to his dismay that it was not there! In his nervousness, while searching for the missing register, he kept on repeating the formula, "I publish the bans of marriage between—I publish the bans of marriage between," till at last the clerk from beneath, in sheer pity, came to the rescue with a suggestion, whispered loudly enough to be heard all over the church: "Between the cushion and the desk, sir." The book had simply slipped under the cushion. The result of the accident was a publication of bans which I should imagine to be unique.—*All the Year Round.*

WOMEN WHO WORK FOR THEIR HUSBANDS.—If a man is a real man it is safe for a woman to continue earning wages after she is married, but I think that there are hundreds of men to-day, yes, thousands, who have been ruined because they were not compelled to support their wives. If a man who earns small wages marries a woman capable of earning as much as himself there are nine chances out of ten that he will develop extravagant habits because of the added income of his wife. If they could agree and hold to the decision that they should live on the husband's income and let the earnings of the wife accumulate as capital for a business in which they both could engage it would be well; but their earnings would probably be largely dissipated in personal adornment, the passion for which, especially among the middle classes, is the bane of the American people. There is one class of women wage earners to whom I have given much attention who suffer considerably through their own ignorance. I refer to the married women who work in factories, or at home, making underclothing and other articles, and who supplement their husbands' wages in order to cover their own deficient knowledge of housekeeping. Such women were wage earners before they were married, and never had an opportunity to learn how to manage a house, so that after marriage they have to earn money to supply their want of knowledge, not only of cooking, but of sewing. Such women buy ready-made clothes for themselves and their children, which, of course, are not so durable as could be had

for the same money if they made them themselves. Not knowing how to economize in cooking, they spend more money in that way than they should. Out of three hundred women wage earners I visited in tenement houses only five claimed that they were able to make bread, and only one really did make it. Only two were able to cut and make garments for themselves and their children. I think that these women are all conscious of their deficiencies, but they do not know how to overcome them. They have some spare time but they waste it. Their cooking is of the most primitive and unwholesome description, and their meals are supplemented with beer, which is looked upon as just as much of an article of diet as bread.—*The Epoch.*

A NEW SEWING-MACHINE ATTACHMENT.—The Young's plaiter is something entirely new in sewing-machine attachments, and is said to be capable of doing all that is claimed for it. Such an attachment has always been in demand. The Young plaiter is rapid in its work and the *plaiting is formed and sewed at the same time*, as fast as the machine can be run, saving all basting and pressing of the cloth. Six different kinds of plaits can be made with the plaiter, viz.: Plain, box (single or double), cluster, kilt, reversible or rose, and in addition to plaiting, the finest ruching is easily made. Plaiting of any length or width can be made, with headings of different widths; all kinds of dress goods work equally well, an important item to dressmakers being the plaiting of silks, as no moisture need to be applied to injure the finish of the silk. Any person who can run a sewing-machine can learn to use the plaiter successfully in fifteen minutes' time by following the directions. The great advantage this attachment possesses, is that it is universal in its application, and it can be attached to any sewing-machine in the market. Every plaiter is guaranteed to work perfectly, and being made of the finest steel and brass, handsomely nickel-plated, will wear for years. The sole agent is Philip F. Schubmehl, Rochester, N. Y., and his illustrated circulars, containing full particulars, will be sent on application. We can speak of personal knowledge that the plaiter is all that it is claimed to be.





A PORTRAIT OF BEETHOVEN, BY W. T. MÄHLER.